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De Quincey's writings

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HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL

ESSAYS.

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY,

AUTHOR OF

'CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER, ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CICERO.

[1842.]

In drawing attention to a great question of whatsoever nature connected with Cicero, there is no danger of missing our purpose through any want of reputed interest in the subject. *Nominally*, it is not easy to assign a period more eventful, a revolution more important, or a personal career more dramatic, than that period — that revolution — that career — which with almost equal right, we may describe as all essentially *Ciceronian*, by the quality of the interest which they excite. For the age, it was fruitful in great men; but amongst them all, if we except the sublime Julian leader, none as regards splendor of endowments stood upon the same level as Cicero. For the revolution, it was that unique event which brought ancient civilization into contact and commerce with modern: since if we figure the two worlds of Paganism and Christianity under the idea of two great continents, it is through the isthmus of Rome imperialized that the one was virtually communicated with the other. Civil law and Christianity, the two central forces of modern civilization, were upon that isthmus of time ripened into potent establishments. And through those two establishments, combined with the antique literature, as through so many organs of

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metempsychosis, did the pagan world pass onwards, whatever portion of its own life was fitted for surviving its own peculiar forms. Yet, in a revolution thus unexampled for grandeur of results, the only great actor who stood upon the authority of his character was Cicero. All others, from Pompey, Curio, Domitius, Cato, down to the final partisans at Actium, moved by the authority of arms; '*tantum auctoritatæ valebant, quantum milite:*' and they could have moved by no other. Lastly, as regards the personal biography, although the same series of trials, perils, and calamities, would have been in any case interesting for themselves, yet undeniably they derive a separate power of affecting the mind from the peculiar merits of the individual concerned. Cicero is one of the very few pagan statesmen who can be described as a thoughtfully conscientious man.

It is not, therefore, any want of splendid attraction in our subject from which we are likely to suffer. It is of this very splendor that we complain, as having long ago defeated the simplicities of truth, and preoccupied the minds of all readers with ideas politically romantic. All tutors, schoolmasters, academic authorities, together with the collective *corps* of editors, critics, commentators, have a natural bias in behalf of a literary man, who did so much honor to literature, and who, in all the storms of this difficult life, manifested so much attachment to the pure literary interest. Readers of sensibility acknowledge the effect from any large influence of deep halcyon repose, when relieving the agitations of history; as, for example, that which arises in our domestic annals from interposing between two bloody reigns, like

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those of Henry VIII. and his daughter Mary, the serene morning of a childlike king, destined to an early grave, yet in the meantime occupied with benign counsels for propagating religion or for protecting the poor. Such a repose, the same luxury of rest for the mind, is felt by all who traverse the great circumstantial records of those tumultuous Roman times, viz. the Ciceronian epistolary correspondence. Upon coming suddenly into deep lulls of angry passions — here, upon some scheme for the extension of literature by a domestic history, or by a comparison of Greek with Roman jurisprudence; there, again, upon some ancient problem from the quiet fields of philosophy — literary men are already prejudiced in favor of one who, in the midst of belligerent partisans, was the patron of intellectual interest. But amongst Christian nations this prejudice has struck deeper: Cicero was not merely a philosopher; he was one who cultivated ethics; he was himself the author of an ethical system, composed with the pious purpose of training to what he thought just moral views his only son. This system survives, is studied to this day, is honored perhaps extravagantly, and has repeatedly been pronounced the best practical theory to which pagan principles were equal. Were it only upon this impulse, it was natural that men should receive a *clinamen*, or silent bias, towards Cicero, as a *moral* authority amongst disputants whose arguments were legions. The author of a moral code cannot be supposed indifferent to the moral relations of his own party views. If he erred, it could not be through want of meditation upon the ground of judgment, or want of interest in the results. So far

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Cicero has an advantage. But he has more lively advantage in the comparison by which he benefits, at *every* stage of his life, with antagonists whom the reader is taught to believe dissolute, incendiary, almost desperate citizens. Verres in the youth of Cicero, Catiline and Clodius in his middle age, Mark Antony in his old age, have all been left to operate on the modern reader's feelings precisely through that masquerade of misrepresentation which invariably accompanied the political eloquence of Rome. The monstrous caricatures from the forum, or the senate, or the democratic rostrum, which were so *confessedly* distortions, by original design, for attaining the ends of faction, have imposed upon scholars pretty generally as faithful portraits. Recluse scholars are rarely politicians; and in the timid horror of German literati, at this day, when they read of real brickbats and paving-stones, not metaphorical, used as figures of speech by a Clodian mob, we British understand the little comprehension of that rough horse-play proper to the hustings, which can yet be available for the rectification of any continental judgment. '*Play*, do you call it?' says a German commentator; 'why that brickbat might break a man's leg; and this paving-stone would be sufficient to fracture a skull.' Too true: they certainly might do so. But, for all that, our British experience of electioneering 'rough-and-tumbling' has long blunted the edge of our moral anger. Contested elections are unknown to the continent — hitherto even to those nations of the continent which boast of representative governments. And with no experience of their inconveniences, they have as yet none of the popular forces in which such contests

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originate. We, on the other hand, are familiar with such scenes. What Rome saw upon one sole hustings, we see repeated upon hundreds. And we all know that the bark of electioneering mobs is worse than their bite. Their fury is without malice, and their insurrectionary violence is without system. Most undoubtedly the mobs and seditions of Clodius are entitled to the same benefits of construction. And with regard to the graver charges against Catiline or Clodius, as men sunk irredeemably into sensual debaucheries, these are exaggerations which have told only from want of attention to Roman habits. Such charges were the standing material, the stock in trade of every orator against every antagonist. Cicero, with the same levity as every other public speaker, tossed about such atrocious libels at random. And with little blame where there was really no discretion allowed. Not *are they true?* but *will they tell?* was the question. Insolvency and monstrous debauchery were the two ordinary reproaches on the Roman hustings. No man escaped them who was rich enough, or had expectations notorious enough, to win for such charges any colorable plausibility. Those only were unmolested in this way who stood in no man's path of ambition; or who had been obscure (that is to say, poor) in youth; or who, being splendid by birth or connections, had been notoriously occupied in distant campaigns. The object in such calumnies was, to produce a momentary effect upon the populace: and sometimes, as happened to Cæsar, the merest falsehoods of a partisan orator were adopted subsequently for truths by the simple-minded soldiery. But the misapprehension of these libels in modern times origi-

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nates in erroneous appreciation of Roman oratory. Scandal was its proper element. Senate or law-tribunal, forum or mob rostrum, made no difference in the licentious practice of Roman eloquence. And, unfortunately, the calumnies survive; whilst the state of things, which made it needless to notice them in reply, has entirely perished. During the transitional period between the old Roman frugality and the luxury succeeding to foreign conquest, a reproach of this nature would have stung with some severity; and it was not without danger to a candidate. But the age of growing voluptuousness weakened the effect of such imputations; and this age may be taken to have commenced in the youth of the Gracchi, about one hundred years before Pharsalia. The change in the direction of men's sensibilities since then, was as marked as the change in their habits. Both changes had matured themselves in Cicero's days; and one natural result was, that few men of sense valued such reproaches, (incapable, from their generality, of specific refutation,) whether directed against friends or enemies. Cæsar, when assailed for the thousandth time by the old fable about Nicomedes the sovereign of Bithynia, no more troubled himself to expose its falsehood in the senate, than when previously dispersed over Rome through the libellous *facetiæ* of Catullus. He knew that the object of such petty malice was simply to tease him; and for himself to lose any temper, or to manifest anxiety, by a labor so hopeless as any effort towards the refutation of an unlimited scandal, was childishly to collude with his enemies. He treated the story, therefore, as if it had been true; and showed that, even under that

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assumption, it would not avail for the purpose before the house. Subsequently, Suetonius, as an express collector of anecdotage and pointed personalities against great men, has revived many of these scurrilous jests; but *his* authority, at the distance of two generations, can add nothing to the credit of calumnies originally founded on plebeian envy, or the jealousy of rivals. We may possibly find ourselves obliged to come back upon this subject. And at this point, therefore, we will not further pursue it than by remarking, that no one snare has proved so fatal to the sound judgment of posterity upon public men in Rome, as this blind credulity towards the oratorical billingsgate of ancient forensic license, or of παρρησια electioneering. Libels, whose very point and jest lay in their extravagance, have been received for historical truth with respect to many amongst Cicero's enemies. And the reaction upon Cicero's own character has been naturally to exaggerate that imputed purity of morals, which has availed to raise him into what is called a 'pattern man.'

The injurious effect upon biographic literature of all such wrenches to the truth, is diffused everywhere. Fenelon, or Howard the philanthropist, may serve to illustrate the effect we mean, when viewed in relation to the stern simplicity of truth. Both these men have long been treated with such uniformity of dissimulation, 'petted' (so to speak) with such honeyed falsehoods as beings too bright and seraphic for human inquisition, that now their real circumstantial merits, quite as much as their human frailties, have faded away in this blaze of fabling idolatry. Sir Isaac Newton, again, for about one entire century since his death in 1727, was

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painted by all biographers as a man so saintly in temper — so meek — so detached from wordly interest, that by mere strength of potent falsehood, the portrait had ceased to be human, and a great man's life furnished no interest to posterity. At length came the odious truth, exhibiting Sir Isaac in a character painful to contemplate, as a fretful, peevish, and sometimes even malicious, intriguer; traits, however, in Sir Isaac already traceable in the sort of chicanery attending his subornation of managers in the Leibnitz controversy, and the publication of the *Commercium Epistolicum*. For the present, the effect has been purely to shock and to perplex. As regards moral instruction, the lesson comes too late; it is now defeated by its inconsistency with our previous training in steady theatrical delusion.

We do not make it a reproach to Cicero, that his reputation with posterity has been affected by these or similar arts of falsification. Eventually this has been his misfortune. Adhering to the truth, his indiscreet eulogists would have presented to the world a much more interesting picture; not so much the representation of '*vir bonus cum malâ fortunâ compositus*,' which is, after all, an ordinary spectacle for so much of the conflict as can ever be made public; but that of a man generally upright, matched as in single duel with a standing tempation to error, growing out of his public position; often seduced into false principles by the necessities of ambition, or by the coercion of self-consistency; and often, as he himself admits, biased finally in a public question by the partialities of friendship. The violence of that crisis was overwhelming to all moral sensibilities; no sense, nc organ, remained

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true to the obligations of political justice; principles and feelings were alike darkened by the extremities of the political quarrel; the feelings obeyed the personal engagements; and the principles indicated only the position of the individual — as between the senate struggling for interests and the democracy struggling for rights.

So far nothing has happened to Cicero which does not happen to all men entangled in political feuds. There are few cases of large party dispute which do not admit of contradictory delineations, as the mind is previously swayed to this extreme or to that. But the peculiarity in the case of Cicero is — not that he has benefited by the mixed quality or the doubtfulness of that cause which he adopted, but that the very dubious character of the cause has benefited by *him*. Usually it happens, that the individual partisan is sheltered under the authority of *his* cause. But here the whole merits of the cause have been predetermined and adjudged by the authority of the partisan. Had Cicero been absent, or had Cicero practised that neutrality to which he often inclined, the general verdict of posterity on the great Roman civil war would have been essentially different from that which we find in history. At present the error is an extreme one; and we call it such without hesitation, because it has maintained itself by imperfect reading, even of such documents as survive, and by too general an oblivion of the important fact, that these surviving documents (meaning the *contemporary* documents) are pretty nearly all *ex parte*.[1]

To judge of the general equity in the treatment of Cicero, considered as a political partisan, let us turn to

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the most current of the regular biographies. Amongst the infinity of slighter sketches, which naturally draw for their materials upon those which are most elaborate, it would be useless to confer a special notice upon any. We will cite the two which at this moment stand foremost in European literature — that of Conyers Middleton, now about one century old, as the memoir most generally read; that of Bernhardt Abeken,[2] (amongst that limited class of memoirs which build upon any political principles,) accidentally the latest.

Conyers Middleton is a name that cannot be mentioned without an expression of disgust. We sit down in perfect charity, at the same table, with sceptics in every degree. To us, simply in his *social* character, and supposing him sincere, a sceptic is as agreeable as another. Anyhow he is better than a craniologist, than a punster, than a St. Simonian, than a Jeremy-Bentham-cock, or an anti-corn-law lecturer. What signifies a name? Free-thinker he calls himself? Good — let him 'free think' as fast as he can; but let him obey the ordinary laws of good faith. No sneering in the first place, because, though it is untrue that 'a sneer cannot be answered,' the answer too often imposes circumlocution. And upon a subject which makes wise men grave, a sneer argues so much perversion of heart, that it cannot be thought uncandid to infer some corresponding perversion of intellect. Perfect sincerity never existed in a professional sneerer; secondly, no treachery, no betrayal of the cause which the man is sworn and paid to support. Conyers Middleton held considerable preferment in the church of England. Long after he had become an enemy to that church, (not separately for itself, but generally as

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a strong form of Christianity,) he continued to receive large quarterly cheques upon a bank in Lombard-street, of which the original condition had been that he should defend Christianity 'with all his soul and with all his strength.' Yet such was his perfidy to this sacred engagement, that even his private or personal feuds grew out of his capital feud with the Christian faith. From the church he drew his bread; and the labor of his life was to bring the church into contempt. He hated Bentley, he hated Warburton, he hated Waterland; and why? all alike as powerful champions of that religion which he himself daily betrayed; and Waterland, as the strongest of these champions, he hated most. But all these bye-currents of malignity emptied themselves into one vast *cloaca maxima* of rancorous animosity to the mere spirit, temper, and tendencies, of Christianity. Even in treason there is room for courage; but Middleton, in the manner, was as cowardly as he was treacherous in the matter. He wished to have it whispered about that he was worse than he seemed, and that he would be a *fort esprit* of a high cast, but for the bigotry of his church. It was a fine thing, he fancied, to have the credit of infidelity, without paying for a license; to sport over those manors without a qualification. As a scholar, meantime, he was trivial and incapable of labor. Even the Roman antiquities, political or juristic, he had studied neither by research and erudition, nor by meditation on their value and analogies. Lastly, his English style, for which at one time he obtained some credit through the caprice of a fashionable critic, is such, that by weeding away from it whatever is colloquial, you would strip it of all that is characteristic: remov-

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ing its idiomatic vulgarisms, you would remove its principle of animation.

That man misapprehends the case, who fancies that the infidelity of Middleton can have but a limited operation upon a memoir of Cicero. On the contrary, because this prepossession was rather a passion of hatred[3] than any aversion of the intellect, it operated as a false bias universally; and in default of any sufficient analogy between Roman politics, and the politics of England at Middleton's time of publication, there was no other popular bias derived from modern ages, which could have been available. It was the object of Middleton to paint, in the person of Cicero, a pure Pagan model of scrupulous morality; and to show that, in most difficult times, he had acted with a self-restraint and a considerate integrity, to which Christian ethics could have added no element of value. Now this object had the effect of, already in the preconception, laying a restraint over all freedom in the execution. No man could start from the assumption of Cicero's uniform uprightness, and afterwards retain any latitude of free judgment upon the most momentous transaction of Cicero's life: because, unless some plausible hypothesis could be framed for giving body and consistency to the pretences of the Pompean cause, it must, upon any examination, turn out to have been as merely a selfish cabal, for the benefit of a few lordly families, as ever yet has prompted a conspiracy. The slang words '*respublica*' and '*causa*,' are caught up by Middleton from the letters of Cicero; but never, in any one instance, has either Cicero or a modern commentator, been able to explain what general interest of the Roman people was represented by these

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vague abstractions. The strife, at that era, was not between the conservative instinct as organized in the upper classes, and the destroying instinct as concentrated in the lowest. The strife was not between the property of the nation and its rapacious pauperism — the strife was not between the honors, titles, institutions, created by the state and the plebeian malice of levellers, seeking for a commencement *de novo*, with the benefits of a general scramble — it was a strife between a small faction of confederated oligarchs upon the one hand, and the nation upon the other. Or, looking still more narrowly into the nature of the separate purposes at issue, it was, on the Julian side, an attempt to make such a re-distribution of constitutional functions, as should harmonize the necessities of the public service with the working of the republican machinery. Whereas, under the existing condition of Rome, through the silent changes of time, operating upon the relations of property and upon the character of the populace, it had been long evident that armed supporters — now legionary soldiers, now gladiators — enormous bribery, and the constant reserve of anarchy in the rear, were become the *regular* counters for conducting the desperate game of the more ordinary civil administration. Not the demagogue only, but the peaceful or patriotic citizen, and the constitutional magistrate, could now move and exercise their public functions only through the deadliest combinations of violence and fraud. This dreadful condition of things, which no longer acted through that salutary opposition of parties, essential to the energy of free countries, but involved all Rome in a permanent panic, was acceptable to the senate only;

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and of the senate, in sincerity, to a very small section. Some score of great houses there was, that by vigilance of intrigues, by far-sighted arrangements for armed force or for critical retreat, and by overwhelming command of money, could always guarantee their own domination. For this purpose, all that they needed was a secret understanding with each other, and the interchange of mutual pledges by means of marriage alliances. Any revolution which should put an end to this anarchy of selfishness, must reduce the exorbitant power of the paramount grandees. They naturally confederated against a result so shocking to their pride. Cicero, as a new member of this faction, himself rich[4] in a degree sufficient for the indefinite aggrandizement of his son, and sure of support from all the interior cabal of the senators, had adopted their selfish sympathies. And it is probable enough that all changes in a system which worked so well for himself, to which also he had always looked up from his youngest days as the reward and haven of his toils, did seriously strike him as dreadful innovations. Names were now to be altered for the sake of things; forms for the sake of substances: this already gave some *verbal* power of delusion to the senatorial faction. And a prospect still more startling to them all, was the necessity towards any restoration of the old republic, that some one eminent grandee should hold provisionally a dictatorial power during the period of transition.

Abeken — and it is honorable to him as a scholar of a section not conversant with politics — saw enough into the situation of Rome at that time, to be sure that Cicero was profoundly in error upon the capital point

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of the dispute; that is, in mistaking a cabal for the commonwealth, and the narrowest of intrigues for a public 'cause.' Abeken, like an honest man, had sought for any national interest cloaked by the wordy pretences of Pompey, and he had found none. He had seen the necessity towards any regenefation of Rome, that Cæsar, or some leader pursuing the same objects, should be armed for a time with extraordinary power. In that way only had both Marius and Sylla each in the same *general* circumstances, though with different feelings, been enabled to preserve Rome from total anarchy. We give Abeken's express words that we may not seem to tax him with any responsibility beyond what he courted. At p. 342, (8th sect.) he owns it as a rule of the sole conservative policy possible for Rome: — 'Dass Cæsar der einzige war, der ohne weitere stuerme, Rom zu dem ziele zu fuehren vermochte, welchem es seit einem jahrhundert sich zuwendete;' that Cæsar was the sole man who had it in his power, without further convulsions, to lead Rome onwards to that final mark, towards which, in tendency, she had been travelling throughout one whole century. Neither could it be of much consequence whether Cæsar should personally find it safe to imitate the example of Sylla in laying down his authority, provided he so matured the safeguards of the reformed constitution, that, on the withdrawal of this temporary scaffolding, the great arch was found capable of self-support. Thus far, as an ingenious student of Cicero's correspondence, Abeken gains a glimpse of the truth which has been so constantly obscured by historians. But, with the natural incapacity for practical politics which besieges all Germans, he

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fails in most of the subordinate cases to decipher the intrigues at work, and ofttimes finds special palliation for Cicero's conduct, where, in reality, it was but a reiteration of that selfish policy in which he had united himself with Pompey.

By way of slightly reviewing this policy, as it expressed itself in the acts or opinions of Pompey, we will pursue it through the chief stages of the contest. Where was it that Cicero first heard the appalling news of a civil war inevitable? It was at Ephesus; at the moment of reaching that city on his return homewards from his proconsular government in Cilicia, and the circumstances of his position were these. On the last day of July, 703, *Ab Urb. Cond.*, he had formally entered on that office. On the last day but one of the same month in 704, he laid it down. The conduct of Cicero in this command was meritorious. And, if our purpose had been generally to examine his merits, we could show cause for making a higher estimate of those merits than has been offered by his professional eulogists. The circumstances, however, in the opposite scale, ought not to be overlooked. He knew himself to be under a jealous supervision from the friends of Verres, or all who might have the same interest. This is one of the two facts which may be pleaded in abatement of his disinterested merit. The other is, that, after all, he did undeniably pocket a large sum of money (more than twenty thousand pounds) upon his year's administration; whilst, on the other hand, the utmost extent of that sum by which he refused to profit was *not* large. This at least we are entitled to say with regard to the only specific sum brought under our notice, as *certainly* awaiting his private disposal.

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Here occurs a very important error of Middleton's. The question of money very much will turn upon the specific amount. An abstinence which is exemplary may be shown in resisting an enormous gain; whereas under a slight temptation the abstinence may be little or none. Middleton makes the extravagant, almost maniacal, assertion, that the sum available by custom as a perquisite to Cicero's suite was 'eight hundred thousand pounds sterling.' Not long after the period in which Middleton wrote, newspapers and the increased facilities for travelling in England, had begun to operate powerfully upon the character of our English universities. Rectors and students, childishly ignorant of the world, (such as Parson Adams and the Vicar of Wakefield,) became a rare class. Possibly Middleton was the last clergyman of that order; though, in any good sense, having little enough of guileless simplicity. In our own experience we have met with but one similar case of heroic ignorance. This occurred near Caernarvon. A poor Welsh woman, leaving home to attend an annual meeting of the Methodists, replied to us who had questioned her as to the numerical amount of members likely to assemble? — 'That perhaps there would be a matter of four millions!' This in little Caernarvon, that by no possibility could accommodate as many thousands! Yet, in justice to the poor cottager, it should be said that she spoke doubtingly, and with an anxious look, whereas Middleton announces this little *bonus* of eight hundred thousand pounds with a glib fluency that demonstrates him to have seen nothing in the amount worth a comment. Let the reader take with him these little adjuncts of the case. First of all, the money

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was a mere *surplus* arising on the public expenditure, and resigned in any case to the suite of the governor, only under the presumption that it must be too trivial to call for any more deliberate appropriation. Secondly, it was the surplus of a *single* year's expenditure. Thirdly, the province itself was chiefly Grecian in the composition of its population; that is, poor, in a degree not understood by most Englishmen, frugally penurious in its habits. Fourthly, the public service was of the very simplest nature. The administration of justice, and the military application of about eight thousand regular troops to the local seditions of the Isaurian freebooters, or to the occasional sallies from the Parthian frontier — these functions of the proconsul summed up his public duties. To us the marvel is, how there could arise a surplus even equal to eight thousand pounds, which some copies countenance. Eight pounds we should have surmised. But to justify Middleton, he ought to have found in the text '*millies*' — a reading which exists nowhere. Figures, in such cases, are always so suspicious as scarcely to warrant more than a slight bias to the sense which they establish: and words are little better, since they may always have been derived from a previous authority in figures. Meantime, simply as a blunder in accurate scholarship, we should think it unfair to have pressed it. But it is in the light of an evidence against Middleton's good sense and thoughtfulness that we regard it as capital. The man who *could* believe that a sum not far from a million sterling had arisen in the course of twelve months, as a little bagatelle of office, a *pot-de-vin*, mere customary fees, payable to the discretional allotment of one who held the most fleeting relation to

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the province, is not entitled to an opinion upon any question of doubtful tenor. Had this been the scale of regular profits upon a poor province, why should any Verres create risk for himself by an arbitrary scale?

The cases, therefore, where the merit turns upon money, unavoidably the ultimate question will turn upon the amount. And the very terms of the transaction, as they are reported by Cicero, indicating that the sum was entirely at his own disposal, argue its trivial value. Another argument implies the same construction. Former magistrates, most of whom took such offices with an express view to the creation of a fortune by embezzlement and by bribes, had established the precedent of relinquishing this surplus to their official 'family.' This fact of itself shows that the amount must have been uniformly trifling: being at all subject to fluctuations in the amount, most certainly it would have been made to depend for its appropriation upon the separate merits of each annual case as it came to be known. In this particular case, Cicero's suite grumbled a little at his decision: he ordered that the money should be carried to the credit of the public. But, had a sum so vast as Middleton's been disposable in mere perquisites, *proh deum atque hominum fidem!* the honorable gentlemen of the suite would have taken unpleasant liberties with the proconsular throat. They would have been entitled to divide on the average forty thousand pounds a man; and they would have married into senatorian houses. Because a score or so of monstrous fortunes existed in Rome, we must not forget that in any age of the Republic a sum of twenty-five thousand pounds would have con-

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stituted a most respectable fortune for a man not embarked upon a public career; and with sufficient connections it would furnish the early costs even for such a career.

We have noticed this affair with some minuteness, both from its importance to the accuser of Verres, and because we shall here have occasion to insist on this very case, as amongst those which illustrate the call for political revolution at Rome. Returning from Cicero the governor to Cicero the man, we may remark, that, although his whole life had been adapted to purposes of ostentation, and *à fortiori* this particular provincial interlude was sure to challenge from his enemies a vindictive scrutiny, still we find cause to think Cicero very sincere in his purity as a magistrate. Many of his acts were not mere showy renunciations of doubtful privileges; but were connected with painful circumstances of offence to intimate friends. Indirectly we may find in these cases a pretty ample violation of the Roman morals. Pretended philosophers in Rome who prated in set books about 'virtue' and the 'summum bonum,' made no scruple, in the character of magistrates, to pursue the most extensive plans of extortion, through the worst abuses of military license; some, as the 'virtuous' Marcus Brutus, not stopping short of murder — a foul case of this description had occurred in the previous year under the sanction of Brutus, and Cicero had to stand his friend in nobly refusing to abet the further prosecution of the very same atrocity. Even in the case of the perquisites, as stated above, Cicero had a more painful duty than that of merely sacrificing a small sum of money: he was summoned by his conscience to offend those

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men with whom he lived, as a modern prince or ambassador lives amongst the members of his official 'family.' Naturally it could be no trifle to a gentle-hearted man, that he was creating for himself a necessity of encountering frowns from those who surrounded him, and who might think, with some reason, that in bringing them to a distant land, he had authorized them to look for all such remunerations as precedent had established. Right or wrong in the casuistical point — we believe him to have been wrong — Cicero was eminently right when once satisfied by arguments, sound or not sound as to the point of duty, in pursuing that duty through all the vexations which it entailed. This justice we owe him pointedly in a review which has for its general object the condemnation of his political conduct.

Never was a child, torn from its mother's arms to an odious school, more homesick at this moment than was Cicero. He languished for Rome; and when he stood before the gates of Rome, about five months later, not at liberty to enter them, he sighed profoundly after the vanished peace of mind which he had enjoyed in his wild mountainous province. 'Quæsivit lucem — ingemuitque repertam.' Vainly he flattered himself that he could compose, by his single mediation, the mighty conflict which had now opened. As he pursued his voyage homewards, through the months of August, September, October, and November, he was met, at every port where he touched for a few days' repose, by reports, more and more gloomy, of the impending rupture between the great partisan leaders. These reports ran along, like the undulations of an earthquake, to the last recesses of the east.

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Every king and every people had been canvassed for the coming conflict; and many had been already associated by pledges to the one side or the other. The fancy faded away from Cicero's thoughts as he drew nearer to Italy, that any effect could now be anticipated for mediatorial counsels. The controversy, indeed, was still pursued through diplomacy; and the negotiations had not reached an *ultimatum* from either side. But Cicero was still distant from the parties; and, before it was possible that any general congress representing both interests, could assemble, it was certain that reciprocal distrust would coerce them into irrevocable measures of hostility. Cicero landed at Otranto. He went forward by land to Brundusium, where, on the 25th of November, his wife and daughter, who had come forward from Rome to meet him, entered the public square of that town at the same moment with himself. Without delay he moved forward towards Rome; but he could not gratify his ardor for a personal interference in the great crisis of the hour, without entering Rome; and *that* he was not at liberty to do, without surrendering his pretensions to the honor of a triumph.

Many writers have amused themselves with the idle vanity of Cicero, in standing upon a claim so windy, under circumstances so awful. But, on the one hand, it should be remembered how eloquent a monument it was of civil grandeur, for a *novus homo* to have established his own amongst the few surviving triumphal families of Rome; and, on the other hand, he could have effected nothing by his presence in the senate. No man could at this moment; Cicero least of all; because his policy had been thus arranged — ultimately

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to support Pompey; but in the meantime, as strengthening the chances against war, to exhibit a perfect neutrality. Bringing, therefore, nothing in his counsels, he could hope for nothing influential in the result. Cæsar was now at Ravenna, as the city nearest to Rome of all which he could make his military head-quarters within the Italian (*i. e.* the Cisalpine) province of Gaul. But he held his forces well in hand, and ready for a start, with his eyes literally fixed on the walls of Rome, so near had he approached. Cicero warned his friend Atticus, that a dreadful and perfectly unexampled war — a struggle 'of life and death' — was awaiting them; and that in his opinion nothing could avert it, short of a great Parthian invasion, deluging the Eastern provinces — Greece, Asia Minor, Syria — such as might force the two chieftains into an instant distraction of their efforts. Out of that would grow the absence of one or other; and upon that separation, for the present, might hang an incalculable series of changes. Else, and but for this one contingency, he announced the fate of Rome to be sealed.

The new year came, the year 705, and with it new consuls. One of these, C. Marcellus, was distinguished amongst the enemies of Cæsar by his personal rancor — a feeling which he shared with his twin-brother Marcus. In the first day of this month, the senate was to decide upon Cæsar's proposals, as a basis for future arrangement. They did so; they voted the proposals, by a large majority, unsatisfactory — instantly assumed a fierce martial attitude — fulminated the most hostile of all decrees, and authorized shocking outrages upon those who, in official situations

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represented Cæsar's interest. These men fled for their lives. Cæsar, on receiving their report, gave the signal for advance; and in forty-eight hours had crossed the little brook called the Rubicon, which determined the marches or frontier line of his province. Earlier by a month than this great event, Cicero had travelled southward. Thus his object was, to place himself in personal communication with Pompey, whose vast Neapolitan estates drew him often into that quarter. But, to his great consternation, he found himself soon followed by the whole stream of Roman grandees, flying before Cæsar through the first two months of the year. A majority of the senators had chosen, together with the consuls, to become emigrants from Rome, rather than abide any compromise with Cæsar. And, as these were chiefly the rich and potent in the aristocracy, naturally they drew along with themselves many humble dependents, both in a pecuniary and a political sense. A strange rumor prevailed at this moment, to which even Cicero showed himself maliciously credulous, that Cæsar's natural temper was cruel, and that his policy also had taken that direction. But the brilliant result within the next six or seven weeks changed the face of politics, disabused everybody of their delusions, and showed how large a portion of the panic had been due to monstrous misconceptions. For already, in March, multitudes of refugees had returned to Cæsar. By the first week of April, that 'monster of energy,' (that τερας of superhuman despatch,) as Cicero repeatedly styles Cæsar, had marched through Italy — had received the submission of every strong fortress — had driven Pompey into his last Calabrian retreat of Brundusium, (at which point

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it was that this unhappy man unconsciously took his last farewell of Italian ground) — had summarily kicked him out of Brundusium — and, having thus cleared all Italy of enemies, was on his road back to Rome. From this city, within the first ten days of April, he moved onwards to the Spanish war, where, in reality, the true strength of Pompey's cause — strong legions of soldiers, chiefly Italian — awaited him in strong positions, chosen at leisure, under Afranius and Petreius. For the rest of this year, 705, Pompey was unmolested. In 706, Cæsar, victorious from Spain, addressed himself to the task of overthrowing Pompey in person; and, on the 9th of August in that year, took place the ever-memorable battle on the river Pharsalus in Thessaly.

During all this period of about one year and a half, Cicero's letters, at intermitting periods, hold the same language. They fluctuate, indeed, strangely in temper; for they run through all the changes incident to hoping, trusting, and disappointed friendship. Nothing can equal the expression of his scorn for Pompey's *inertia*, when contrasted with energy so astonishing on the part of his antagonist. Cicero had also been deceived as to facts. The plan of the campaign had, to him in particular, not been communicated; he had been allowed to calculate on a final resistance in Italy. This was certainly impossible. But the policy of maintaining a show of opposition, which it was intended to abandon at *every* point, or of procuring for Cæsar the credit of so many successive triumphs, which might all have been evaded, has never received any explanation.

Towards the middle of February, Cicero acknowl-

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edges the receipt of letters from Rome, which in one sense are valuable, as exposing the system of self-delusion prevailing. Domitius, it seems, who soon after laid down his arms *at* Corfinium, and *with* Corfinium, parading his forces only to make a more solemn surrender, had, as the despatches from Rome asserted, an army on which he could rely; as to Cæsar, that nothing was easier than to intercept him; that such was Cæsar's own impression; that honest men were recovering their spirits; and that the rogues at Rome (*Romæ improbos*) were one and all in consternation. It tells powerfully for Cicero's sagacity, that now, amidst this general explosion of childish hopes, he only was sternly incredulous. '*Hæc metuo, equidem, ne sint somnia.*' Yes, he had learned by this time to appreciate the windy reliances of his party. He had an argument from experience for slighting their vain demonstrations; and he had a better argument from the future, as that future was *really* contemplated in the very counsels of the leader. Pompey, though nominally controlled by other men of consular rank, was at present an autocrat for the management of the war. What was his policy? Cicero had now discovered, not so much through confidential interviews, as by the mute tendencies of all the measures adopted — Cicero was satisfied that his total policy had been, from the first, a policy of despair.

The position of Pompey, as an old invalid, from whom his party exacted the services of youth, is worthy of separate notice. There is not, perhaps, a more pitiable situation than that of a veteran reposing upon his past laurels, who is summoned from beds of down, and from the elaborate system of comforts

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engrafted upon a princely establishment, suddenly to re-assume his armor — to prepare for personal hardships of every kind — to renew his youthful anxieties, without support from youthful energies — once again to dispute sword in hand the title to his own honors — to pay back into the chancery of war, as into some fund of abeyance, all his own prizes, and palms of every kind — to re-open every decision or award by which he had ever benefited — and to view his own national distinctions of name, trophy, laurel crown,[5] as all but so many stakes provisionally resumed, which must be redeemed by services tenfold more difficult than those by which originally they had been earned.

Here was a trial painful, unexpected, sudden; such as any man, at any age, might have honorably declined. The very best contingency in such a struggle was, that nothing might be lost; whilst, along with this doubtful hope, ran the certainty — that nothing could be gained. More glorious in the popular estimate of his countrymen, Pompey could not become, for his honors were already historical, and touched with the autumnal hues of antiquity, having been won in a generation now gone by; but on the other hand he might lose everything, for, in a contest with so dreadful an antagonist as Cæsar, he could not hope to come off unscorched; and, whatever might be the final event, one result must have struck him as inevitable, viz. that a new generation of men, who had come forward into the arena of life within the last twenty years, would watch the approaching collision with Cæsar as putting to the test a question much canvassed of late, with regard to the soundness and legitimacy of Pompey's military exploits. As a commander-in-chief

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Pompey was known to have been unusually fortunate. The bloody contests of Marius, Cinna, Sylla, and their vindictive, but, perhaps, unavoidable, proscription, had thinned the ranks of natural competitors, at the very opening of Pompey's career. That interval of about eight years, by which he was senior to Cæsar, happened to make the whole difference between a crowded list of candidates for offices of trust, and no list at all. Even more lucky had Pompey found himself in the character of his appointments, and in the quality of his antagonists. All his wars had been of that class which yield great splendor of external show, but impose small exertion and less risk. In the war with Mithridates he succeeded to great captains who had sapped the whole stamina and resistance of the contest; besides that, after all the varnishings of Cicero, when speaking for the Manilian law, the enemy was too notoriously effeminate. The bye-battle with the Cilician pirates, is more obscure; but it is certain that the extraordinary powers conferred on Pompey by the Gabinian law, gave to *him*, as compared with his predecessors in the same effort at cleansing the Levant from a nuisance, something like the unfair superiority above their brethren enjoyed by some of Charlemagne's paladins, in the possession of enchanted weapons. The success was already ensured by the great armament placed at Pompey's disposal; and still more by his unlimited commission, which enabled him to force these water-rats out of their holes, and to bring them all into one focus; whilst the pompous name of *Bellum Piraticum*, exaggerated to all after years a success which had been at the moment too partially facilitated. Finally, in his triumph over Sertorius, where only he

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would have found a great Roman enemy capable of applying some measure of power to himself, by the energies of resistance, although the transaction is circumstantially involved in much darkness, enough remains to show that Pompey shrank from open contest — passively, how far co-operatively it is hard to say, Pompey owed his triumph to mere acts of decoy and subsequent assassination.

Upon this sketch of Pompey's military life, it is evident that he must have been regarded, after the enthusiasm of the moment had gone by, as a hollow scenical pageant. But what had produced this enthusiasm at the moment? It was the remoteness of the scenes. The pirates had been a troublesome enemy, precisely in that sense which made the Pindarrees of India such to ourselves; because, as flying marauders, lurking and watching their opportunities, they could seldom be brought to action; so that not their power, but their want of power, made them formidable, indisposing themselves to concentration, and consequently weakening the motive to a combined effort against them. Then, as to Mithridates, a great error prevailed in Rome with regard to the quality of his power. The spaciousness of his kingdom, its remoteness, his power of retreat into Armenia — all enabled him to draw out the war into a lingering struggle. These local advantages were misinterpreted. A man who could resist Sylla, Lucullus, and others, approved himself to the raw judgments of the multitude as a dangerous enemy. Whence a very disproportionate appreciation of Pompey — as of a second Scipio who had destroyed a second Hannibal. If Hannibal had transferred the war to the gates of Rome, why not Mithridates, who

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had come westwards as far as Greece? And, upon that argument, the panic-struck people of Rome fancied that Mithridates might repeat the experiment. They overlooked the changes which nearly one hundred and fifty years had wrought. As possible it would have been for Scindia and Holkar forty years ago, as possible for Tharawaddie at this moment, to conduct an expedition into England, as for Mithridates to have invaded Italy at the era of 670–80 of Rome. There is a wild romantic legend, surviving in old Scandinavian literature, that Mithridates did not die by suicide, but that he passed over the Black Sea; from Pontus on the south-east of that sea to the Baltic; crossed the Baltic; and became that Odin whose fierce vindictive spirit reacted upon Rome, in after centuries, through the Goths and Vandals, his supposed descendants: just as the blood of Dido, the Carthaginian queen, after mounting to the heavens — under her dying imprecation,

'Exoriare aliquis nostro de sanguine vindex' —

came round in a vast arch of bloodshed upon Rome, under the retaliation of Hannibal, four or five centuries later. This Scandinavian legend might answer for a grand romance, carrying with it, like the Punic legend, a semblance of mighty retribution; but, as an historical possibility, any Mithridatic invasion of Italy would be extravagant. Having been swallowed, however, by Roman credulity as a danger, always *in procinctu*, so long as the old Pontic lion should be unchained, naturally it had happened that this groundless panic, from its very indistinctness and shadowy outline, became more available for Pompey's immoderate glorifi-

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cation than any service so much nearer to home as to be more rationally appreciable. With the same unexampled luck, Pompey, as the last man in the series against Mithridates, stepped into the inheritance of merit belonging to the entire series in that service; and as the laborer who easily reaped the harvest, practically threw into oblivion all those who had so painfully sown it.

But a special Nemesis haunts the steps of men who become great and illustrious by appropriating the trophies of their brothers. Pompey, more strikingly than any man in history, illustrates the moral in his catastrophe. It is perilous to be dishonorably prosperous; and equally so, as the ancients imagined, whether by direct perfidies, (of which Pompey is deeply suspected,) or by silent acquiescence in unjust honors, Seared as Pompey's sensibilities might be through long self-indulgence, and latterly by annual fits of illness, founded on dyspepsy, he must have had, at this great era, a dim misgiving that his good genius was forsaking him. No Shakspeare, with his unusual warnings, had then proclaimed the dark retribution which awaited his final year: but the sentiment of Shakspeare (see his sonnets) is eternal; and must have whispered itself to Pompey's heart, as he saw the billowy war advancing upon him in his old age —

> 'The painful warrior, famoused for fight,
> After a thousand victories — *once* foil'd,
> Is from the book of honor razed quite,
> And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd.'

To say the truth, in this instance as in so many others, the great moral of the retribution escapes us — because we do not connect the scattered phenomena

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into their rigorous unity. Most readers pursue the early steps of this mightiest amongst all civil wars with the hopes and shifting sympathies natural to those who *accompanied* its motions. Cicero must ever be the great authority for the daily fluctuations of public opinion in the one party, as Cæsar, with a few later authors, for those in the other. But inevitably these coeval authorities, shifting their own positions as events advanced, break the uniformity of the lesson. They did not see, as we may if we will, to the end. Sometimes the Pompeian partisans are cheerful; sometimes even they are sanguine; once or twice there is absolutely a slight success to color their vaunts. But much of this is mere political dissimulation. We now find, from the confidential parts of Cicero's correspondence, that he had never heartily hoped from the hour when he first ascertained Pompey's drooping spirits, and his desponding policy. And in a subsequent stage of the contest, when the war had crossed the Adriatic, we now know, by a remarkable passage in his *De Divinatione*, that, whatever he might think it prudent to say, never from the moment when he personally attached himself to Pompey's camp, had he felt any reliance whatever on the composition of the army. Even to Pompey's misgiving ear in solitude, a fatal summons must have been sometimes audible, to resign his quiet life and his showy prosperity. The call was in effect — 'Leave your palaces; come back to camps — never more to know a quiet hour!' What if he could have heard *arrière pensée* of the silent call! 'Live through a brief season of calamity; live long enough for total ruin; live for a morning on which it will be said — *All is lost;* as a panic-stricken fugitive, sue to the mercies

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of slaves; and in return, as a headless trunk, lie like a poor mutilated mariner, rejected by the sea, a wreck from a wreck — owing even the last rites of burial to the pity of a solitary exile.' This doom, and thus circumstantially, no man could know. But, in features that were even gloomier than these, Pompey might, through his long experience of men, have foreseen the bitter course which he had to traverse. It did not require any extraordinary self-knowledge to guess, that continued opposition upon the plan of the campaign would breed fretfulness in himself; that the irritation of frequent failure, inseparable from a war so widely spread, would cause blame or dishonor to himself; that his coming experience would be a mere chaos of obstinacy in council, loud remonstrance in action, crimination and recrimination, insolent dictation from rivals, treachery on the part of friends, flight and desertion on the part of confidants. Yet even this fell short of the shocking consummation into which the frenzy of faction ripened itself within a few months. We know of but one case which resembles it, in one remarkable feature. Those readers who are acquainted with Lord Clarendon's *History*, will remember the very striking portrait which he draws of the king's small army of reserve in Devonshire and the adjacent districts, subsequently to the great parliamentary triumph of Naseby in June, 1645. The ground was now cleared; no work remained for Fairfax but to advance to Northampton, and to sweep away the last relics of opposition. In every case this would have proved no trying task. But what was the condition of the hostile forces? Lord Clarendon, who had personally presided at their head-quarters whilst in attendance upon the

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Prince of Wales, describes them in these emphatic terms as 'a wicked beaten army.' Rarely does history present us with such a picture of utter debasement in an army — coming from no enemy, but from one who, at the very moment of recording his opinion, knew this army to be the king's final resource. Reluctant as a wise man must feel to reject as irredeemable in vileness that which he knows to be indispensable to hope, this solemn opinion of Lord Clarendon's, upon his royal master's last stake, had been in earlier ages anticipated by Cicero, under the very same circumstances, with regard to the same ultimate resource. The army which Pompey had concentrated in the regions of northern Greece, *was* the ultimate resource of that party; because, though a strong *nucleus* for other armies existed in other provinces, these remoter dependencies were in all likelihood contingent upon the result from this — were Pompey prosperous, *they* would be prosperous; if not, not. Knowing, therefore, the fatal emphasis which belonged to his words, not blind to the inference which they involved, Cicero did, notwithstanding, pronounce confidentially that same judgment of despair upon the army soon to perish at Pharsalia, which, from its strange identity of tenor and circumstances, we have quoted from Lord Clarendon. Both statesmen spoke confessedly of a last sheet anchor; both spoke of an army vicious in its military composition: but also, which is the peculiarity of the case, both charged the *onus* of their own despair upon the non-professional qualities of the soldiers; upon their licentious uncivic temper; upon their open anticipations of plunder; and upon their tiger-training towards a great festival of coming revenge.

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Lord Clarendon, however, it may be said, did not include the commander of the Devonshire army in his denunciation. No: and *there* it is that the two reports differ. Cicero *did* include the commander. It was the commander whom he had chiefly in his eye. Others, indeed, were parties to the horrid conspiracy against the country which he charged upon Pompey: for *non datur conjuratio aliter quam per plures;* but these 'others' were not the private soldiers — they were the leading officers, the staff, the council at Pompey's head-quarters, and generally the men of senatorial rank. Yet still, to complete the dismal unity of the prospect, these conspirators had an army of ruffian foreigners under their orders, such as formed an appropriate engine for their horrid purposes.

This is a most important point for clearing up the true character of the war; and it has been utterly neglected by historians. It is notorious that Cicero, on first joining the faction of Pompey after the declaration of hostilities, had for some months justified his conduct on the doctrine — that the 'causa,' the constitutional merits of the dispute, lay with Pompey. He could not deny that Cæsar had grievances to plead; but he insisted on two things: 1. That the mode of redress, by which Cæsar made his appeal, was radically illegal; 2. That the certain tendency of this redress was to a civil revolution. Such had been the consistent representation of Cicero, until the course of events made him better acquainted with Pompey's real temper and policy. It is also notorious — and here lies the key to the error of all biographers — that about two years later, when the miserable death of Pompey had indisposed Cicero to remember his wicked unaccomplished

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purposes, and when the assassination of Cæsar had made it safe to resume his ancient mysterious animosity to the very name of the great man, Cicero did undoubtedly go back to his early way of distinguishing between them. As an orator, and as a philosopher, he brought back his original distortions of the case. Pompey, it was again pleaded, had been a champion of the state, (sometimes he ventured upon saying, of liberty,) Cæsar had been a traitor and a tyrant. The two extreme terms of his own politics, the earliest and the last, do in fact meet and blend. But the proper object of scrutiny for the sincere inquirer is this parenthesis of time, that intermediate experience which placed him in daily communion with the real Pompey of the year *Ab Urbe Cond.* 705, and which extorted from his indignant patriotism revelations to his confidential friend so atrocious, that nothing in history approaches them.

This is the period to examine; for the logic of the case is urgent. Were Cicero now alive, he could make no resistance to a construction, and a personal appeal such as this. Easily you might have a motive, subsequently to your friend's death, for dissembling the evil you had once imputed to him. But it is impossible that, as an unwilling witness, you could have had any motive at all for counterfeiting or exaggerating on your friend an evil purpose that did not exist. The dissimulation might be natural — the stimulation was inconceivable. To suppress a true scandal was the office of a sorrowing friend — to propagate a false one was the office of a knave: not, therefore, that later testimony which to have garbled was amiable, but that coeval testimony which to have invented was insanity — this it is which we must abide by. Besides

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that, there is another explanation of Cicero's later language than simple piety to the memory of a friend. His discovery of Pompey's execrable plan was limited to a few months; so that, equally from its brief duration, its suddenness, and its astonishing contradiction to all he had previously believed of Pompey, such a painful secret was likely enough to fade from his recollection, after it had ceased to have any practical importance for the world. On the other hand, Cicero had a deep vindictive policy in keeping back an evil that he knew of Pompey. It was a mere necessity of logic, that, if Pompey had meditated the utter destruction of his country by fire and sword — if, more atrociously still, he had cherished a resolution of unchaining upon Italy the most ferocious barbarians he could gather about his eagles, Getæ for instance, Colchians, Armenians — if he had ransacked the ports of the whole Mediterranean world, and had mustered all the shipping from fourteen separate states enumerated by Cicero, with an express purpose of intercepting all supplies from Rome, and of inflicting the slow torments of famine upon that vast yet non-belligerent city — then, in opposing such a monster, Cæsar was undeniably a public benefactor. Not only would the magnanimity and the gracious spirit of forgiveness in Cæsar, be recalled with advantage into men's thoughts, by any confession of this hideous malignity in his antagonist; but it really became impossible to sustain any theory of ambitious violence in Cæsar, when regarded under his relations to such a body of parricidal conspirators. Fighting for public objects that are difficult of explaining to a mob, easily may any chieftain of a party be misrepresented as a child of

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selfish ambition. But, once emblazoned as the sole barrier between his native land and a merciless avenger by fire and famine, he would take a tutelary character in the minds of all men. To confess one solitary council — such as Cicero had attended repeatedly at Pompey's head-quarters in Epirus — was, by acclamation from every house in Rome, to evoke a hymn of gratitude towards that great Julian deliverer, whose Pharsalia had turned aside from Italy a deeper woe than any which Paganism records.

We insist inexorably upon this state of relations, as existing between Cicero and the two combatants. We refuse to quit this position. We affirm that, at a time when Cicero argued upon the purposes of Cæsar in a manner confessedly conjectural, on the other hand, with regard to Pompey, from confidential communications, he reported it as a dreadful discovery, that mere destruction to Rome was, upon Pompey's policy, the catastrophe of the war. Cæsar, he might persuade himself, would revolutionize Rome; but Pompey, he knew in confidence, meant to leave no Rome in existence. Does any reader fail to condemn the selfishness of the constable Bourbon — ranging himself at Pavia in a pitched battle against his sovereign, on an argument of private wrong? Yet the constable's treason had perhaps identified itself with his self-preservation; and he had no reason to anticipate a lasting calamity to his country from any act possible to an individual. If we look into ancient history, the case of Hippias, the son of Pisistratus, scarcely approaches to this. He indeed returned to Athens in company with the invading hosts of Darius. But he had probably been expelled from Athens by violent injustice; and, though

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attending a hostile invasion, he could not have caused it. Hardly a second case can be found in all history as a parallel to the dreadful design of Pompey, unless it be that of Count Julian calling in the Saracens to ravage Spain, and to overthrow the altars of Christianity, on the provocation of one outrage to his own house; early in the eighth century invoking a scourge that was not entirely to be withdrawn until the sixteenth. But then for Count Julian it may be pleaded — that the whole tradition is doubtful; that if true to the letter, his own provocation was enormous; and that we must not take the measure of what he meditated by the frightful consequences which actually ensued. Count Julian might have relied on the weakness of the sovereign for giving a present effect to his vengeance, but might still rely consistently enough on the natural strength of his country, when once coerced into union, for ultimately confounding the enemy — and perhaps for confounding the false fanaticism itself. For the worst traitor whom history has recorded, there remains some plea of mitigation; something in aggravation of the wrongs which he had sustained, something in abatement of the retaliation which he designed. Only for Pompey there is none. Rome had given him no subject of complaint. It was true that the strength of Cæsar lay there; because immediate hopes from revolution belonged to democracy, to the oppressed, to the multitudes in debt, for whom the law had neglected to provide any prospect or degree of relief; and these were exactly the class of persons that could not find funds for emigrating. But still there was no overt act, no official act, no representative act, by which Rome had declared herself for either party.

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Cicero was now aghast at the discoveries he made with regard to Pompey. Imbecility of purpose — distraction of counsels — feebleness in their dilatory execution — all tended to one dilemma, either that Pompey, as a mere favorite of luck, never had possessed any military talents, or that, by age and conscious inequality to his enemy, these talents were now in a state of collapse. Having first, therefore, made the discovery that his too celebrated friend was anything but a statesman, (*απολιτικωτατος*,) Cicero came at length to pronounce him *αστρατηγικωτατον* — anything but a general. But all this was nothing in the way of degradation to Pompey's character, by comparison with the final discovery of the horrid retaliation which he meditated upon all Italy, by coming back with barbarous troops to make a wilderness of the opulent land, and upon Rome in particular, by so posting his blockading fleets and his cruisers as to intercept all supplies of corn from Sicily — from the province of Africa — and from Egypt. The great moral, therefore, from Cicero's confidential confessions is — that he abandoned the cause as untenable; that he abandoned the sppposed party of 'good men,' as found upon trial to be odious intriguers — and that he abandoned Pompey in any privileged character of a patriotic leader. If he still adhered to Pompey as an individual, it was in memory of his personal obligations to that oligarch, but, secondly, for the very generous reason — that Pompey's fortunes were declining; and because Cicero would not be thought to have shunned that man in his misfortunes, whom in reality he had felt tempted to despise only for his enormous errors.

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After these distinct and reiterated acknowledgments, it is impossible to find the smallest justification for the great harmony of historians in representing Cicero as having abided by those opinions with which he first entered upon the party strife. Even at that time it is probable that Cicero's deep sense of gratitude to Pompey secretly, had entered more largely into his decision than he had ever acknowledged to himself. For he had at first exerted himself anxiously to mediate between the two parties. Now, if he really fancied the views of Cæsar to proceed on principles of destruction to the Roman constitution, all mediation was a hopeless attempt. Compromise between extremes lying so widely apart, and in fact, as between the affirmation and the negation of the same propositions, must have been too plainly impossible to have justified any countenance to so impracticable a speculation.

But was not such a compromise impossible in practice, even upon our own theory of the opposite requisitions? No. And a closer statement of the true principles concerned, will show it was not. The great object of the Julian party was, to heal the permanent collision between the supposed functions of the people, in their electoral capacity, in their powers of patronage, and in their vast appellate jurisdiction, with the assumed privileges of the senate. We all know how dreadful have been the disputes in our own country as to the limits of the constitutional forces composing the total state. Between the privileges of the Commons and the prerogative of the Crown, how long a time, and how severe a struggle was required to adjust the true temperament! To say nothing of the fermenting disaffection towards the government throughout the

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reign of James I., and the first fifteen years of his son, the great civil war grew out of the sheer contradictions arising between the necessities of the public service and the *letter* of superannuated prerogatives. The simple history of that great strife was, that the democracy, the popular elements in the commonwealth, had outgrown the provisions of old usages and statutes. The king, a most conscientious man, believed that the efforts of the Commons, which represented only the instincts of rapid growth in all popular interests, cloaked a secret plan of encroachment on the essential rights of the sovereign. In this view he was confirmed by lawyers, the most dangerous of all advisers in political struggles; for they naturally seek the solution of all contested claims, either in the position and determination of ancient usage, or in the constructive view of its analogies. Whereas, here the very question was concerning a body of usage and precedent, not denied in many cases as facts, whether that condition of policy, not unreasonable as adapted to a community, having but two dominant interests, were any longer safely tenable under the rise and expansion of a third. For instance, the whole management of our foreign policy had always been reserved to the crown, as one of its most sacred mysteries, or *απορρητα*; yet, if the people could obtain no indirect control of this policy, through the amplest control of the public purse, even their domestic rights might easily be made nugatory. Again, it was indispensable that the crown purse, free from all direct responsibility, should be checked by some responsibility, operating in a way to preserve the sovereign in his constitutional sanctity. This was finally effected by the admirable compromise — of lodging

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the responsibility in the persons of all servants by or through whom the sovereign could act. But this was so little understood by Charles I. as any constitutional privilege of the people, that he resented the proposal as much more insulting to himself than that of fixing the responsibility in his own person. The latter proposal he viewed as a violation of his own prerogative, founded upon open wrong. There was an injury, but no insult. On the other hand, to require of him the sacrifice of a servant, whose only offence had been in his fidelity to himself, was to expect that he should act collusively with those who sought to dishonor him. The absolute *to el Rey* of Spanish kings, in the last resort, seemed in Charles's eye indispensable to the dignity of the crown. And his legal counsellors assured him that, in conceding this point, he would degrade himself into a sort of upper constable, having some disagreeable functions, but none which could surround him with majestic attributes in the eyes of his subjects. Feeling thus, and thus advised, and religiously persuaded that he held his powers for the benefit of his people, so as to be under a deep moral incapacity to surrender 'one dowle' from his royal plumage, he did right to struggle with that energy and that cost of blood which marked his own personal war from 1642 to 1645. Now, on the other hand, we know, that nearly all the concessions sought from the king, and refused as mere treasonable demands, were subsequently re-affirmed, assumed into our constitutional law, and solemnly established forever, about forty years later, by the Revolution of 1688–89. And this great event was in the nature of a compromise. For the patriots of 1642 had been betrayed into some

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capital errors, claims both irreconcilable with the dignity of the crown, and useless to the people. This ought not to surprise us, and does not extinguish our debt of gratitude to those great men. Where has been the man, much less the party of men, that did not, in a first essay upon so difficult an adjustment as that of an equilibration between the limits of political forces, travel into some excesses? But forty years' experience — the restoration of a party familiar with the invaluable uses of royalty, and the harmonious co-operation of a new sovereign, already trained to a system of restraints, made this final settlement as near to a perfect adjustment and compromise between all conflicting rights, as, perhaps, human wisdom could attain.

Now, from this English analogy, we may explain something of what is most essential in the Roman conflict. This great feature was common to the two cases — that the change sought by the revolutionary party was not an arbitrary change, but in the way of a natural *nisus*, working secretly throughout two or three generations. It was a tendency that would be denied. Just as, in the England of 1640, it is impossible to imagine that, under any immediate result whatever, ultimately the mere necessities of expansion in a people, ebullient with juvenile energies, and passing, at every decennium, into new stages of development, could have been gainsayed or much retarded. Had the nation embodied less of that stern political temperament, which leads eventually to extremities in action, it is possible that the upright and thoughtful character of the sovereign might have reconciled the Commons to expedients of present redress, and for twenty years the

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crisis might have been evaded. But the licentious character of Charles II. would inevitably have challenged the resumption of the struggle in a more embittered shape; for in the actual war of 1642, the *separate* resources of the crown were soon exhausted; and a deep sentiment of respect towards the king kept alive the principle of fidelity to the crown, through all the oscillations of the public mind. Under a stronger reaction against the personal sovereign, it is not absolutely impossible that the aristocracy might have come into the project of a republic. Whenever this body stood aloof, and by alliance with the church, as well as with a very large section of the democracy, their non-adhesion to republican plans finally brought them to extinction. But the principle cannot be refused — that the conflict was inevitable; that the collision could in no way have been evaded; and for the same reason as spoken so loudly in Rome — because the grievances to be redressed, and the incapacities to be removed, and the organs to be renewed, were absolute and urgent; that the evil grew out of the political system; that this system had generally been the silent product of time; and that as the sovereign, in the English case most conscientiously, so, on the other hand, in Rome, the Pompeian faction, with no conscience at all, stood upon the letter of usage and precedent, where the secret truth was — that nature herself, that nature which works in political by change, by growth, by destruction, not less certainly that in physical organizations, had long been silently superannuating these precedents, and preparing the transition into forms more in harmony with public safety.

The capital fault in the operative constitution of

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Rome, had long been in the *antinomies*, if we may be pardoned for so learned a term, of the public service. It is not so true an expression — that anarchy was always to be apprehended, as, in fact — that anarchy always subsisted. What made this anarchy more and less dangerous, was the personal character of the particular man militant for the moment; next, the variable interest which such a party might have staked upon the contest; and lastly, the variable means at his disposal towards public agitation. Fortunately for the public safety, these forces, like all forces in this world of compensations, and of fluctuations, obeying steady laws, rose but seldom into the excess which menaced the framework of the state. Even in disorder, when long-continued, there is an order that can be calculated: dangers were foreseen; remedies were put into an early state of preparation. But because the evil had not been so ruinous as might have been predicted, it was not the less an evil, and it was not the less enormously increasing. The democracy retained a large class of functions, for which the original uses had been long extinct. Powers, which had utterly ceased to be available for interests of their own, were now used purely as the tenures by which they held a vested interest in bribery. The sums requisite for bribery were rising as the great estates rose. No man, even in a gentlemanly rank, no *eques*, no ancient noble even, unless his income were hyperbolically vast, or unless as the creature of some party in the background, could at length face the ruin of a political career. We do not speak of men anticipating a special resistance, but of those who stood in ordinary circumstances. Atticus is not a man whom we should cite for any authority in

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a question of principle, for we believe him to have been a dissembling knave, and the most perfect vicar of Bray extant; but in a question of prudence, his example is decisive. Latterly he was worth a hundred thousand pounds. Four-fifths of this sum, it is true, had been derived from a casual bequest; however, he had been rich enough, even in early life, to present all the poor citizens of Athens — probably twelve thousand families — with a year's consumption for two individuals of excellent wheat; and he had been distinguished for other ostentatious largesses; yet this man held it to be ridiculous, in common prudence, that he should embark upon any political career. Merely the costs of an ædileship, to which he would have arrived in early life, would have swallowed up the entire hundred thousand pounds of his mature good luck. 'Honores non petiit; quod neque peti more majorum, neque capi possent, conservatis legibus, in tam effusis largitionibus; neque geri sine periculo, corruptis civitatis moribus.' But this argument on the part of Atticus pointed to a modest and pacific career. When the politics of a man, or his special purpose, happened to be polemic, the costs, and the personal risk, and the risk to the public peace, were on a scale prodigiously greater. No man with such views could think of coming forward without a princely fortune, and the courage of a martyr. Milo, Curio, Decimus, Brutus, and many persons besides, in a lapse of twenty-five years, spent fortunes of four and five hundred thousand pounds, and without accomplishing, after all, much of what they proposed. In other shapes, the evil was still more malignant; and, as these circumstantial cases are the most impressive, we will bring forward a few.

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I. — *Provisional administrations.* The Romans were not characteristically a rapacious or dishonest people — the Greeks were; and it is a fact strongly illustrative of that infirmity in principle, and levity, which made the Greeks so contemptible to the graver judgments of Rome — that hardly a trustworthy man could be found for the receipt of taxes. The regular course of business was, that the Greeks absconded with the money, unless narrowly watched. Whatever else they might be — sculptors, buffoons, dancers, tumblers — they were a nation of swindlers. For the art of fidelity in peculation, you might depend upon them to any amount. Now, amongst the Romans, these petty knaveries were generally unknown. Even as knaves they had aspiring minds; and the original key to their spoliations in the provinces, was undoubtedly the vast scale of their domestic corruption. A man who had to begin by bribing one nation, must end by fleecing another. Almost the only open channels through which a Roman nobleman could create a fortune, (always allowing for a large means of marrying to advantage, since a man might shoot a whole series of divorces, still refunding the last dowry, but still replacing it with a better,) were these two — lending money on sea-risks, or to embarrassed municipal corporations on good landed or personal security, with the gain of twenty, thirty, or even forty per cent.; and secondly, the grand resource of a provincial government. The abuses we need not state: the prolongation of these lieutenancies beyond the legitimate year, was one source of enormous evil; and it was the more rooted an abuse, because very often it was undeniable that other evils arose in the

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opposite scale from too hasty a succession of governors, upon which principle no consistency of local improvements could be ensured, nor any harmony even in the administration of justice, since each successive governor brought his own system of legal rules.

As to the other and more flagrant abuses in extortion from the province, in garbling the accounts and defeating all scrutiny at Rome, in embezzlement of military pay, and in selling every kind of private advantage for bribes, these have been made notorious by the very circumstantial exposure of Verres. But some of the worst evils are still unpublished, and must be looked for in the indirect revelations of Cicero when himself a governor, as well as the incidental relations by special facts and cases. We, on our parts, will venture to raise a doubt whether Verres ought really to be considered that exorbitant criminal whose guilt has been so profoundly impressed upon us all by the forensic artifices of Cicero. The true reasons for his condemnation must be sought, first, in the proximity of Rome of that Sicilian province where many of his alleged oppressions had occurred — the fluent intercourse with his island, and the multiplied inter-connections of individual towns with Roman grandees, aggravated the facilities of making charges; whilst the proofs were anything but satisfactory in the Roman judicature. Here lay one disadvantage of Verres; but another was — that the ordinary system of bribes, viz. the sacrifice of one portion from the spoils in the shape of bribes to the jury (*judices*) in order to redeem the other portions, could not be applied in this case. The spoils were chiefly works

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of art; Verres was the very first man who formed a gallery of art in Rome; and a French writer in the *Académie des Inscriptions* has written a most elaborate *catalogue raisonnée* to his gallery — drawn from the materials left by Cicero and Pliny. But this was obviously a sort of treasure that did not admit of partition. And the object of Verres would equally have been defeated by selling a part for the costs of 'salvage' on the rest. In this sad dilemma, Verres upon the whole resolved to take his chance; or, if bribery were applied to some extent, it must have stopped far short of that excess to which it would have proceeded under a more disposable form of his gains. But we will not conceal the truth which Cicero indirectly reveals. The capital abuse in the provincial system was — not that the guilty governor might escape, but that the innocent governor might be ruined. It is evident that, in a majority of cases, this magistrate was thrown upon his own discretion. Nothing could be so indefinite and uncircumstantial as the Roman laws on this head. The most upright administrator was almost as cruelly laid open to the fury of calumnious persecution as the worst; both were often cited to answer upon parts of their administration altogether blameless; but, when the original rule had been so wide and lax, the final resource must be in the mercy of the tribunals.

II. — *The Roman judicial system.* This would require a separate volume, and chiefly upon this ground — that in no country upon earth, except Rome, has the ordinary administration of justice been applied as a great political engine. Men, who could not other-

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wise be removed, were constantly assailed by impeachments; and oftentimes for acts done forty or fifty years before the time of trial. But this dreadful aggravation of the injustice was not generally needed. The system of trial was the most corrupt that has ever prevailed under European civilization. The composition of their courts, as to the *rank* of the numerous jury, was continually changed: but no change availed to raise them above bribery. The rules of evidence were simply none at all. Every hearsay, erroneous rumor, atrocious libel, was allowed to be offered as evidence. Much of this never could be repelled, as it had not been anticipated. And, even in those cases where no bribery was attempted, the issue was dependent, almost in a desperate extent, upon the impression made by the advocate. And finally it must be borne in mind that there was no presiding *judge*, in our sense of the word, to sum up — to mitigate the effect of arts of falsehood in the advocate — to point the true bearing of the evidence — still less to state and to restrict the law. Law there very seldom was any, in a precise circumstantial shape. The verdict might be looked for accordingly. And we do not scruple to say — that so triumphant a machinery of oppression has never existed, no, not in the dungeons of the inquisition.

III. — *The license of public libelling.* Upon this we had proposed to enlarge. But we must forbear. One only caution we must impress upon the reader; he may fancy that Cicero would not practise or defend in others the absolute abuse of confidence on the part of the jury and audience by employing direct false-

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hoods. But this is a mistake. Cicero, in his justification of the artifices used at the bar, evidently goes the whole length of advising the employment of all misstatements whatsoever which wear a plausible air. His own practice leads to the same inference. Not the falsehood, but the defect of probability, is what in his eyes degrades any possible assertion or insinuation And he holds also — that a barrister is not accountable for the frequent self-contradictions in which he must be thus involved at different periods of time. The immediate purpose is paramount to all extra-judicial consequences whatever, and to all subsequent exposures of the very grossest inconsistency in the most calumnious falsehoods.

IV. — *The morality of expediency employed by Roman statesmen.* The regular relief, furnished to Rome under the system of anarchy which Cæsar proposed to set aside, lay in seasonable murders. When a man grew potent in political annoyance, somebody was employed to murder him. Never was there a viler or better established murder than that of Clodius by Milo, or that of Carbo and others by Pompey when a young man, acting as the tool of Sylla. Yet these and the murders of the two Gracchi, nearly a century before Cicero justifies as necessary. So little progress had law and sound political wisdom then made, that Cicero was not aware of anything monstrous in pleading for a most villanous act — that circumstances had made it expedient. Such a man is massacred, and Cicero appeals to all your natural feelings of honor against the murderers. Such another is massacred on the opposite side, and Cicero thinks it quite sufficient to reply

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— 'Oh, but I assure you he was a bad man — I knew him to be a bad man. And it was his duty to be murdered — as the sole service he could render the commonwealth.' So again, in common with all his professional brethren, Cicero never scruples to ascribe the foulest lust and abominable propensities to any public antagonist; never asking himself any question but this — Will it look probable? He personally escaped such slanders, because as a young man he was known to be rather poor, and very studious. But in later life a horrible calumny of that class settled upon himself, and one peculiarly shocking to his parental grief; for he was then sorrowing in extremity for the departed lady who had been associated in the slander. Do we lend a moment's credit to the foul insinuation? No. But we see the equity of this retribution revolving upon one who had so often slandered others in the same malicious way. At last the poisoned chalice came round to his own lips, and at a moment when it wounded the most acutely.

V. —*The continued repetition of convulsions in the state.* Under the last head we have noticed a consequence of the long Roman anarchy dreadful enough to contemplate, viz. the necessity of murder as a sole relief to the extremities continually recurring, and as a permanent temptation to the vitiation of all moral ideas in the necessity of defending it imposed often upon such men as Cicero. This was an evil which cannot be exaggerated: but a more extensive evil lay in the recurrence of those conspiracies which the public anarchy promoted. We have all been deluded upon this point. The conspiracy of Catiline, to those who

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weigh well the mystery still enveloping the names of Cæsar, of the Consul C. Antonius, and others suspected as partial accomplices in this plot, and who consider also what parties were the exposers or merciless avengers of this plot, was but a reiteration of the attempts made within the previous fifty years by Marius, Cinna, Sylla, and finally by Cæsar and by his heir Octavius, to raise a reformed government, safe and stable, upon this hideous oligarchy that annually almost brought the people of Rome into the necessity of a war and the danger of a merciless proscription. That the usual system of fraudulent falsehoods was offered by way of evidence against Catiline, is pretty obvious. Indeed, why should it have been spared? The evidence, in a lawyer's sense, is after all none at all. The pretended revelations of foreign envoys go for nothing. These could have been suborned most easily. And the shocking defect of the case is — that the accused party were never put on their defence, never confronted with the base tools of the accusers, and the senators amongst them were overwhelmed with clamors if they attempted their defence in the senate. The motive to this dreadful injustice is manifest. There *was* a conspiracy; that we do not doubt? and of the same nature as Cæsar's. Else why should eminent men, too dangerous for Cicero to touch, have been implicated in the obscurer charges? How had they any interest in the ruin of Rome? How had Catiline any interest in such a tragedy? But all the grandees, who were too much embarrassed in debt to bear the means of profiting by the machinery of bribes applied to so vast a populace, naturally wished to place the administration of public affairs on another footing;

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many from merely selfish purposes, like Cethegus or Lentulus — some, we doubt not, from purer motives of enlarged patriotism. One charge against Catiline we may quote from many, as having tainted the most plausible part of the pretended evidence with damnatory suspicions. The reader may not have remarked — but the fact is such — that one of the standing artifices for injuring a man with the populace of Rome, when all other arts had failed, was to say, that amongst his plots was one for burning the city. This cured that indifference with which otherwise the mob listened to stories of conspiracy against a system which they held in no reverence or affection. Now, this most senseless charge was renewed against Catiline. It is hardly worthy of notice. Of what value to him could be a heap of ruins? Or how could he hope to found an influence amongst those who were yet reeking from such a calamity?

But, in reality, this conspiracy was that effort continually moving underground, and which would have continually exploded in shocks dreadful to the quiet of the nation, which mere necessity, and the instincts of position, prompted to the parties interested. Let the reader only remember the long and really ludicrous succession of men sent out against Antony at Mutina by the senate, viz. Octavius, Plancus, Asinius Pollio, Lepidus, every one of whom fell away almost instantly to the anti-senatorial cause, to say nothing of the consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, who would undoubtedly have followed the general precedent, had they not been killed prematurely: and it will become apparent how irresistible this popular cause was, as the sole introduction to a patriotic reformation, ranged too notoriously

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against a narrow scheme of selfishness, which interested hardly forty families. It does not follow that all men, simply as enemies of an oligarchy, would have afterwards exhibited a pure patriotism. Cæsar, however, did. His reforms, even before his Pompeian struggle, were the greatest ever made by an individual; and those which he carried through after that struggle, and during that brief term which his murderers allowed him, transcended by much all that in any one century had been accomplished by the collective patriotism of Rome.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 13.

Even here there is a risk of being misunderstood. Some will read this term *ex parte* in the sense, that now there are no neutral statements surviving. But such statements there never were. The controversy moving for a whole century in Rome before Pharsalia, was not about facts, but about constitutional principles; and as to that question there could be no neutrality. From the nature of the case, the truth must have lain with one of the parties; compromise, or intermediate temperament, was inapplicable. What we complain of as overlooked is, not that the surviving records of the quarrel are partisan records, (that being a mere necessity,) but in the forensic use of the term *ex parte*, that they are such without benefit of equilibrium or modification from the partisan statements in the opposite interest.

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Note 2. Page 14.

Cicero in Seinen Briefen, Von Bernhard Rudolf Abeken, Professor am Raths-Gymnas, zu Osnabrück. Hanover, 1835.

Note 3. Page 16.

'*Hatred.*' — It exemplifies the pertinacity of this hatred to mention, that Middleton was one of the men who sought, for twenty years, some historical facts that might conform to Leslie's four conditions, (*Short Method with the Deists*,) and yet evade Leslie's logic. We think little of Leslie's argument, which never could have been valued by a sincerely religious man. But the rage of Middleton, and his perseverance, illustrate his temper of warfare.

Note 4. Page 18.

'*Rich.*' — We may consider Cicero as worth, in a case of necessity, at least £400,000. Upon that part of this property which lay in money, there was always a very high interest to be obtained ; but not so readily a good security for the principal. The means of increasing this fortune by marriage was continually offering to a leading senator, such as Cicero, and the facility of divorce aided this resource.

Note 5. Page 31.

'*Laurel crown.*' — Amongst the honors granted to Pompey at a very early period, was the liberty to wear a diadem or *corona* on ceremonial occasions. The common reading was '*auream coronam*' until Lipsius suggested *lauream ;* which correction has since been generally adopted into the text. This distinction is remarkable when contrasted with the same trophy as afterwards conceded to Cæsar, in relation to the popular feelings, so different in the two cases.

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STYLE.

[1840.]

Amongst the never-ending arguments for thankfulness in the privilege of a British birth — arguments more solemn even than numerous, and telling more when weighed than when counted, *pondere quàm numero* — three aspects there are of our national character which trouble the uniformity of our feelings. A good son, even in such a case, is not at liberty to describe himself as 'ashamed.' Some gentler word must be found to express the character of his distress. And, whatever grounds of blame may appear against his venerated mother, it is one of his filial duties to suppose — either that the blame applies but partially, or, if it should seem painfully universal, that it is one of those excesses to which energetic natures are liable, through the very strength of their constitutional characteristics. Such things do happen. It is certain, for instance, that to the deep sincerity of British nature, and to that shyness or principle of reserve which is inseparable from self-respect, must be traced philosophically the churlishness and unsocial bearing, for which, at one time, we were so angrily arraigned by the smooth south of Europe. That facile obsequiousness, which attracts the inconsiderate in Belgians,

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Frenchmen, and Italians, is too generally a mixed product from impudence and insincerity. Want of principle and want of moral sensibility compose the original *fundus* of southern manners: and the natural product, in a specious hollowness of demeanor, has been afterwards propagated by imitation through innumerable people, who may have partaken less deeply, or not at all, in the original moral qualities that have moulded such a manner.

Great faults, therefore, may grow out of great virtues in excess. And this consideration should make us cautious even towards an enemy; much more when approaching so holy a question as the merits of our maternal land. Else, and supposing that a strange nation had been concerned in our judgment, we should declare ourselves mortified and humiliated by three expressions of the British character, too public to have escaped the notice of Europe. First, we writhe with shame when we hear of semi-delirious lords and ladies, sometimes theatrically costumed in caftans and turbans, proclaiming to the whole world — as the law of their households — that all nations and languages are free to enter their gates, with one sole exception directed against their British compatriots; that is to say, abjuring by sound of trumpet that land through which only they themselves have risen into consideration; spurning those for countrymen — 'without whom,' (as M. Gourville had the boldness to tell Charles II.) 'without whom, by G— Sir, you yourself are nothing.' We all know who *they* are that have done this thing: we *may* know, if we inquire, how many conceited coxcombs are at this moment acting upon that precedent; in which we scruple not to avow, is con-

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tained a fund of satire, more crying than any which Juvenal found in the worst days of Rome. And we may ask calmly — Would not death, judicial death, have visited such an act amongst the ancient republics? Next, but with that indulgence which belongs to an infirmity rather than an error of the will, we feel ashamed for the obstinate obtuseness of our country, in regard to one and the most effective of the Fine Arts. It will be understood that we speak of music. In painting and in sculpture it is now past disputing, that if we are destined to inferiority at all, it is an inferiority only to the Italians and the ancient Greeks; an inferiority which, if it were even sure to be permanent, we share with all the other malicious nations around us. On that head we are safe. And in the most majestic of the Fine Arts, in poetry, we have a clear and vast pre-eminence as regards all nations; no nation but ourselves have equally succeeded in both forms of the higher poetry, epic and tragic. Whilst of meditative or philosophic poetry, (Young's, Cowper's, Wordsworth's,) — to say nothing of lyric — we may affirm what Quinctilian says justly of Roman satire — '*tota quidem nostra est.*' If, therefore, in every mode of composition through which the impassioned mind speaks, a nation has excelled its rivals, we cannot be allowed to suppose any general defect of sensibility as a cause of obtuseness with regard to music. So little, however, is the grandeur of this divine art suspected amongst us generally, that a man will write an essay deliberately for the purpose of putting on record his own preference of a song, to the most elaborate music of Mozart: he will glory in his shame, and though speaking in the character of one confess-

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ing to a weakness, will evidently view himself in the light of a candid man, laying bare a state of feeling which is natural and sound, opposed to a class of false pretenders who, whilst servile to rules of artists, in reality contradict their own musical instincts, and feel little or nothing of what they profess. Strange that even the analogy of other arts should not open his eyes to the delusion he is encouraging! A song, an air, a tune — that is, a short succession of notes revolving rapidly upon itself, how could that, by possibility, offer a field of compass sufficient for the development of great musical effects? The preparation pregnant with the future, the remote correspondence, the questions, as it were, which to a deep musical sense, are asked in one passage, and answered in another; the iteration and ingemination of a given effect, moving through subtle variations that sometimes disguise the theme, sometimes fitfully reveal it, sometimes throw it out tumultuously to the daylight, — these and ten thousand forms of self-conflicting musical passion — what room could they find, what opening, for utterance in so limited a field as an air or song? A hunting-box, a park-lodge, may have a forest grace and the beauty of appropriateness; but what if a man should match such a bauble against the Pantheon, or against the minsters of York and Strasburg? A repartee may by accident be practically effective; it has been known to crush a party scheme, and an oration of Cicero's, or of Burke's, could have done no more; but what judgment would match the two against each other as developments of power? Let him who finds the *maximum* of his musical gratification in a song, be assured, by that one fact, that his sensibility is rude and unde-

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veloped. Yet exactly upon this level is the ordinary state of musical feeling throughout Great Britain; and the howling wilderness of the psalmody in most parish churches of the land, countersigns the statement. There is, however, accumulated in London more musical science than in any capital of the world. This, gradually diffused, will improve the feeling of the country. And, if it should fail to do so, in the worst case we have the satisfaction of knowing, through Jean Jacques Rousseau, and by later evidences, that, sink as we may below Italy and Germany in the sensibility to this divine art, we cannot go lower than France. Here, however, and in this cherished obtuseness as to a pleasure so important for human life, and at the head of the physico-intellectual pleasures, we find a second reason for quarrelling with the civilization of our country. At the summit of civilization in other points, she is here yet uncultivated and savage.

A third point is larger. Here (properly speaking) our quarrel is co-extensive with that general principle in England, which tends in all things to set the matter above the manner, the substance above the external show; a principle noble in itself, but inevitably wrong wherever the manner blends inseparably with the substance.

This general tendency operates in many ways: but our own immediate purpose is concerned with it only so far as it operates upon style. In no country upon earth, where it is possible to carry such a maxim into practical effect, is it a more determinate tendency of the national mind to value the *matter* of a book, not only as paramount to the *manner*, but even as distinct from it, and as capable of a separate insulation. What

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first gave a shock to such a tendency, must have been the unwilling and mysterious sense — that, in some cases, the matter and the manner were so inextricably interwoven, as not to admit of this coarse bisection. The one was embedded, entangled, and interfused through the other, in a way which bade defiance to such gross mechanical separations. But the tendency to view the two elements as in a separate relation still predominates; and, as a consequence, the tendency to undervalue the accomplishment of style. Do we mean that the English, as a literary nation, are practically less sensible of the effects of a beautiful style? Not at all. Nobody can be insensible to these effects. And, upon a known fact of history, viz. the *exclusive* cultivation of popular oratory in England, throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, we might presume a peculiar and exalted sense of style amongst ourselves. Until the French Revolution, no nation of Christendom except England had any practical experience of popular rhetoric; any deliberative eloquence, for instance; any forensic eloquence that was made public; any democratic eloquence of the hustings; or any form whatever of public rhetoric beyond that of the pulpit. Through two centuries at least, no nation could have been so constantly reminded of the powers for good and evil which belong to style. Often it must have happened, to the mortification or joy of multitudes, that one man out of windy nothings has contructed an overwhelming appeal to the passions of his hearers, whilst another has thrown away the weightiest cause by his manner of treating it. Neither let it be said, that this might not arise from differences of style, but because the triumphant demagogue made use of fic-

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tions, and, therefore, that his triumph was still obtained by means of his matter, however hollow that matter might have proved upon investigation. That case, also, is a possible case; but often enough two orators have relied upon the same identical matter — the facts, for instance, of the slave-trade — and one has turned this to such good account by his arrangements, by his modes of vivifying dry statements, by his arts of illustration, by his science of connecting things with human feeling, that he has left his hearers in convulsions of passion; whilst the other shall have used every tittle of the same matter without eliciting one scintillation of sympathy, without leaving behind one distinct impression in the memory, or planting one murmur in the heart.

In proportion, therefore, as the English people have been placed for two centuries and a quarter, (*i. e.* since the latter decennium of James the First's reign,) under a constant experience of popular eloquence thrown into all channels of social life, they must have had peculiar occasion to feel the effects of style. But to feel is not to feel consciously. Many a man is charmed by one cause who ascribes the effect to another. Many a man is fascinated by the artifices of composition, who fancies that it is the subject which has operated so potently. And even for the subtlest of philosophers who keeps in mind the interpenetration of the style and the matter, it would be as difficult to distribute the true proportion of their joint action, as, with regard to the earliest rays of the dawn, it would be to say how much of the beauty lay in the heavenly light which chased away the darkness — how much in the rosy color which that light entangled.

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Easily, therefore, it may have happened, that, under the constant action and practical effects of style, a nation may have failed to notice the cause *as* the cause. And, besides the disturbing forces which mislead the judgment of the auditor in such a case, there are other disturbing forces which modify the practice of the speaker. That is good rhetoric for the hustings which is bad for a book. Even for the highest forms of popular eloquence, the laws of style vary much from the general standard. In the senate, and for the same reason in a newspaper, it is a virtue to reiterate your meaning: tautology becomes a merit: variation of the words, with a substantial identity of the sense and dilution of the truth, is oftentimes a necessity. A man who should content himself with a single condensed enunciation of a perplexed doctrine, would be a madman and a *felo-de-se*, as respected his reliance upon that doctrine. Like boys who are throwing the sun's rays into the eyes of a mob by means of a mirror, you must shift your lights and vibrate your reflexions at every possible angle, if you would agitate the popular mind extensively. Every mode of intellectual communication has its separate strength and separate weakness; its peculiar embarrassments, compensated by peculiar resources. It is the advantage of a book, that you can return to the past page if anything in the present depends upon it. But, return being impossible in the case of a spoken harangue, where each sentence perishes as it is born, both the speaker and the hearer become aware of a mutual interest in a much looser style, and a perpetual dispensation from the severities of abstract discussion. It is for the benefit of both, that the weightier propositions should be

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detained before the eye a good deal longer than the chastity of taste or the austerity of logic would tolerate in a book. Time must be given for the intellect to eddy about a truth, and to appropriate its bearings. There is a sort of previous lubrication, such as the boa-constrictor applies to any subject of digestion, which is requisite to familiarize the mind with a startling or a complex novelty. And this is obtained for the intellect by varying the modes of presenting it, — now putting it directly before the eye, now obliquely, now in an abstract shape, now in the concrete; all which being the proper technical discipline for dealing with such cases, ought no longer to be viewed as a licentious mode of style, but as the just style in respect of those licentious circumstances. And the true art for such popular display is — to contrive the best forms for appearing to say something new, when in reality you are but echoing yourself; to break up massy chords into running variations; and to mask, by slight differences in the manner, a virtual identity in the substance.

We have been illustrating a twofold neutralizing effect applied to the advantages, otherwise enjoyed by the English people, for appreciating the forms of style. What was it that made the populace of Athens and of Rome so sensible to the force of rhetoric and to the magic of language? It was the habit of hearing these two great engines daily worked for purposes interesting to themselves as citizens, and sufficiently intelligible to command their willing attention. The English amongst modern nations have had the same advantages, allowance being made for the much less intense concentration of the audience. In the ancient repub-

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lics it was always the same city; and, therefore, the same audience, except in so far as it was spread through many generations. This has been otherwise in England; and yet, by newspaper reports, any great effect in one assize town, or electoral town, has been propagated to the rest of the empire, through the eighteenth and the present century. But all this, and the continual exemplification of style as a great agency for democratic effect, have not availed to win a sufficient *practical* respect, in England, for the arts of composition as essential to authorship. And the reason is, because, in the first place, from the intertexture of style and matter, from the *impossibility that the one should affect them otherwise than in connection with the other*, it has been natural for an audience to charge on the superior agent what often belonged to the lower. This, in the first place; and, secondly, because *the modes of style appropriate to popular eloquence being essentially different from those of written composition*, any possible experience on the hustings, or in the senate, would *pro tanto* tend rather to disqualify the mind for appreciating the more chaste and more elaborate qualities of style fitted for books; and thus a real advantage of the English in one direction has been neutralized by two causes in another.

Generally and ultimately, it is certain, that our British disregard or inadequate appreciation of style, though a very lamentable fault, has had its origin in the manliness of the British character; in the sincerity and directness of the British taste; in the principle of '*esse quam videri*,' which might be taken as the key to much in our manner, much in the philosophy of our lives; and finally in that same love for the practi-

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cal and the tangible which has so memorably governed the course of our higher speculations from Bacon to Newton. But, whatever may have been the origin of this most faulty habit, whatever mixed causes now support it, beyond all question it is, that such a habit of disregard or of slight regard applied to all the arts of composition does exist in the most painful extent, and is detected by a practised eye in every page of almost every book that is published.

If you could look anywhere with a right to expect continual illustrations of what is good in the manifold qualities of style, it should reasonably be amongst our professional authors; but, as a body, they are distinguished by the most absolute carelessness in this respect. Whether in the choice of words and idioms, or in the construction of their sentences, it is not possible to conceive the principle of lazy indifference carried to a more revolting extremity. Proof lies before you, spread out upon every page, that no excess of awkwardness, or of inelegance, or of unrythmical cadence, is so rated in the tariff of faults as to balance, in the writer's estimate, the trouble of remoulding a clause, of interpolating a phrase, or even of striking the pen through a superfluous word. In our own experience it has happened, that we have known an author so laudably fastidious in this subtle art, as to have recast one chapter of a series no less than seventeen times; so difficult was the ideal or model of excellence which he kept before his mind; so indefatigable was his labor for mounting to the level of that ideal. Whereas, on the other hand, with regard to a large majority of the writers now carrying forward the literature of the country from the last

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generation to the next, the evidence is perpetual — not so much that they rest satisfied with their own random preconceptions of each clause or sentence, as that they never trouble themselves to form any such preconceptions. Whatever words tumble out under the blindest accidents of the moment, those are the words retained; whatever sweep is impressed by chance upon the motion of a period, that is the arrangement ratified. To fancy that men thus determinately careless as to the grosser elements of style would pause to survey distant proportions, or to adjust any more delicate symmetries of good composition, would be visionary. As to the links of connection, the transitions, and the many other functions of logic in good writing, things are come to such a pass, that what was held true of Rome in two separate ages, by two great rhetoricians, and of Constantinople in an age long posterior, may now be affirmed of England: the idiom of our language, the mother tongue, survives only amongst our women and children; not, Heaven knows, amongst our women who write books — they are often painfully conspicuous for all that disfigures authorship; but amongst well-educated women not professionally given to literature. Cicero and Quinctilian, each for his own generation, ascribed something of the same pre-eminence to the noble matrons of Rome; and more than one writer of the lower empire has recorded of Byzantium, that in the nurseries of that city was found the last home for the purity of the ancient Greek. No doubt it might have been found also amongst the innumerable mob of that haughty metropolis, but stained with corruptions and vulgar abbreviations. Or wherever it might lurk, assuredly it was

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not amongst the noble, the officials, or the courtiers; else it was impossible that such a master of affectation as Nicetas Choniates, for instance, should have found toleration. But the *rationale* of this matter lies in a small compass: why are the local names, whenever they have resulted from the general good sense of a country, faithful to the local truth, grave, and unaffected? Simply because they are not inventions of any active faculty, but mere passive depositions from a real impression upon the mind. On the other hand, wherever there is an ambitious principle set in motion for name-inventing, there it is sure to terminate in something monstrous and fanciful. Women offend in such cases even more than men; because more of sentiment or romance will mingle with the names they impose. Sailors again err in an opposite spirit; there is no affectation in their names, but there is too painful an effort after ludicrous allusions to the gravities of their native land — 'Big Wig Island,' or 'the Bishop and his Clerks:' or the name becomes a memento of real incidents, but too casual and personal to merit this lasting record of a name, such as *Point Farewell*, or *Cape Turn-again*. This fault applies to many of the Yankee[1] names, and to many more in the southern and western states of North America, where the earliest population has usually been of a less religious character: and, most of all, it applies to the names of the back settlements. These people live under influences the most opposite to those of false refinement; coarse necessities, elementary features of peril or embarrassment, primary aspects of savage nature, compose the scenery of their thoughts; and these are reflected by their names. *Dismal Swamp* expresses a condition

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of unreclaimed nature, which must disappear with growing civilization. *Big Bone Lick* tells a tale of cruelty that cannot often be repeated. Buffaloes, like all cattle, derive medicinal benefit from salt; they come in droves for a thousand miles to lick the masses of rock salt. The new settlers observing this, lie in ambush to surprise them: twenty-five thousand noble animals, in one instance, were massacred for their hides. In the following year the usual crowds advanced; but the first who snuffed the tainted air wheeled round, bellowed, and 'recoiled' far into his native woods. Meantime the large bones remain to attest the extent of the merciless massacre. Here, as in all cases, there is a truth expressed; but again too casual and special. Besides that, from contempt of elegance, or from defect of art, the names resemble the seafaring nomenclature in being too rudely compounded.

As with the imposition of names, so with the use of the existing language, most classes stand between the pressure of two extremes — of coarseness, of carelessness, of imperfect art, on the one hand, of spurious refinement and fantastic ambition upon the other. Authors have always been a dangerous class for any language. Amongst the myriads who are prompted to authorship by the coarse love of reputation, or by the nobler craving for sympathy, there will always be thousands seeking distinctions through novelties of diction. Hopeless of any audience through mere weight of matter, they will turn for their last resource to such tricks of innovation as they can bring to bear upon language. What care they for purity or simplicity of diction, if at any cost of either they can win

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a special attention to themselves? Now, the great body of women are under no such unhappy bias. If they happen to move in polished circles, or have received a tolerable education, they will speak their native language of necessity with truth and simplicity. And supposing them not to be professional writers, (as so small a proportion *can* be, even in France or England,) there is always something in the situation of women which secures a fidelity to the idiom. From the greater excitability of females, and the superior vivacity of their feelings, they will be liable to far more irritations from wounded sensibilities. It is for such occasions chiefly that they seek to be effective in their language. Now, there is not in the world so certain a guarantee for pure idiomatic diction, without tricks or affectation, as a case of genuine excitement. Real situations are always pledges of a real natural language. It is in counterfeit passion, in the mimical situations of novels, or in poems that are efforts of ingenuity, and no ebullitions of absolute unsimulated feeling, that female writers endeavor to sustain their own jaded sensibility, or to reinforce the languishing interest of their readers by extravagances of language. No woman in this world, under a movement of resentment from a false accusation, or from jealousy, or from confidence betrayed, ever was at leisure to practise vagaries of caprice in the management of her mother tongue; strength of real feeling shuts out all temptation to the affectation of false feeling.

Hence the purity of the female Byzantine Greek. Such caprices as they had took some other course, and found some other vent than through their mother tongue. Hence, also, the purity of female English.

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Would you desire at this day to read our noble language in its native beauty, picturesque from idiomatic propriety, racy in its phraseology, delicate yet sinewy in its composition — steal the mail-bags, and break open all the letters in female handwriting. Three out of four will have been written by that class of women who have the most leisure and the most interest in a correspondence by the post — that class who combine more of intelligence, cultivation, and of thoughtfulness, than any other in Europe — the class of unmarried women above twenty-five — an increasing class;[2] women who, from mere dignity of character, have renounced all prospects of conjugal and parental life, rather than descend into habits unsuitable to their birth. Women capable of such sacrifices, and marked by such strength of mind, may be expected to think with deep feeling, and to express themselves (unless where they have been too much biased by bookish connections) with natural grace. Not impossibly these same women, if required to come forward in some public character, might write ill and affectedly. They would then have their free natural movement of thought distorted into some accommodation to artificial standards, amongst which they might happen to select a bad one for imitation. But in their letters they write under the benefit of their natural advantages; not warped, on the one hand, into that constraint or awkwardness which is the inevitable effect of conscious exposure to public gaze; yet, on the other, not left to vacancy or the chills of apathy, but sustained by some deep sympathy between themselves and their correspondents.

So far as concerns idiomatic English, we are satis-

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fied from the many beautiful female letters which we have heard upon chance occasions from every quarter of the empire, that they, the educated women of Great Britain — above all, the interesting class of women unmarried upon scruples of sexual honor — and also (as in Constantinople of old) the nurseries of Great Britain, are the true and best depositaries of the old mother idiom. But we must not forget, that though this is another term for what is good in English, when we are talking of a human and a popular interest, there is a separate use of the language, as in the higher forms of history or philosophy, which ought not to be idiomatic. As respects that which *is*, it is remarkable that the same orders cling to the ancient purity of diction amongst ourselves who did so in pagan Rome — viz. *women*, for the reasons just noticed, *and people of rank*. So much has this been the tendency in England, that we know a person of great powers, but who has in all things a one-sided taste, and is so much a lover of idiomatic English as to endure none else, who professes to read no writer since Lord Chesterfield. It is certain that this accomplished nobleman, who has been most unjustly treated from his unfortunate collision with a national favorite, and in part also from the laxity of his moral principles, where, however, he spoke worse than he thought, wrote with the ease and careless grace of a high-bred gentleman. But his style is not peculiar: it has always been the style of his order. After making the proper allowance for the continual new infusions into our peerage from the bookish class of lawyers, and for some modifications derived from the learned class of spiritual peers, the tone of Lord Chesterfield has

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always been the tone of our old aristocracy; a tone of elegance and propriety, above all things free from the stiffness of pedantry or academic rigor, and obeying Cæsar's rule of shunning *tanquam scopulum* any *insolens verbum*. It is, indeed, through this channel that the solicitudes of our British nobility have always flowed: other qualities might come and go according to the temperament of the individual; but what in all generations constituted an object of horror for that class, was bookish precision and professional peculiarity. From the free popular form of our great public schools, to which nine out of ten amongst our old nobility resorted, it happened unavoidably that they were not equally clear of popular vulgarities; indeed, from another cause, *that* could not have been avoided — for it is remarkable that a connection, as close as through an umbilical cord, has always been maintained between the very highest orders of our aristocracy and the lowest of our democracy, by means of nurses. The nurses and immediate personal attendants of all classes come from the same sources, most commonly from the peasantry of the land; they import into all families alike, into the highest and the lowest, the coarsest expressions from the vernacular language of anger and contempt. Whence, for example, it was, that about five or six years ago, when a new novel circulated in London, with a private understanding that it was a juvenile effort from two very young ladies of the very highest rank, nobody who reflected at all could feel much surprise that one of the characters should express her self-esteem by the popular phrase that she did not 'think small beer of herself.' Equally in its faults and its merits, the

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language of high life has always tended to simplicity and the vernacular ideal, recoiling from every mode of bookishness. And in this, as in so many other instances, it is singular to note the close resemblance between polished England and polished Rome. Augustus Cæsar was so little able to enter into any artificial forms of tortuous obscurities of ambitious rhetoric, that he could not so much as understand them. Even the old antique forms of language, where it happened that they had become obsolete, were to him disgusting. And probably the main bond of connection between himself and Horace was their common and excessive hatred of obscurity; from which quality, indeed, the very intellectual defects of both, equally with their good taste, alienated them to intensity.

The pure racy idiom of colloquial or household English, we have insisted, must be looked for in the circles of well-educated women not too closely connected with books. It is certain that books, in any language, will tend to encourage a diction too remote from the style of spoken idiom; whilst the greater solemnity, and the more ceremonial costume of regular literature must often demand such a non-idiomatic diction, upon mere principles of good taste. But why is it that in our day literature has taken so determinate a swing towards this professional language of books, as to justify some fears that the other extreme of the free colloquial idiom will perish as a living dialect? The apparent cause lies in a phenomenon of modern life, which, on other accounts also, is entitled to anxious consideration. It is in newspapers that we must look for the main reading of this generation;

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and in newspapers, therefore, we must seek for the causes operating upon the style of the age. Seventy years ago this tendency in political journals to usurp upon the practice of books, and to mould the style of writers, was noticed by a most acute observer, himself one of the most brilliant writers in the class of satiric sketches and personal historians that any nation has produced. Already, before 1770, the late Lord Oxford was in the habit of saying to any man who consulted him on the cultivation of style — 'Style is it that you want? Oh, go and look into the newspapers for a style.' This was said half contemptuously and half seriously. But the evil has now become overwhelming. One single number of a London morning paper, which in half a century has expanded from the size of a dinner napkin to that of a breakfast tablecloth, from that to a carpet, and will soon be forced, by the expansions of public business, into something resembling the mainsail of a frigate, already is equal in printed matter to a very large octavo volume. Every old woman in the nation now reads daily a vast miscellany in one volume royal octavo. The evil of this, as regards the quality of knowledge communicated, admits of no remedy. Public business, in its whole unwieldy compass, must always form the subject of these daily chronicles. Nor is there much room to expect any change in the style. The evil effect of this upon the style of the age may be reduced to two forms. Formerly the natural impulse of every man was, spontaneously to use the language of life; the language of books was a secondary attainment not made without effort. Now, on the contrary, the daily composers of newspapers

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have so long dealt in the professional idiom of books, as to have brought it home to every reader in the nation who does not violently resist it by some domestic advantages. Time was, within our own remembrance, that if you should have heard, in passing along the street, from any old apple-woman such a phrase as 'I will *avail myself* of your kindness,' forthwith you would have shied like a skittish horse — you would have run away in as much terror as any old Roman upon those occasions when *Bos loquebatur*. At present you swallow such marvels as matters of course. The whole artificial dialect of books has come into play as the dialect of ordinary life. This is one form of the evil impressed upon our style by journalism; a dire monotony of bookish idiom has encrusted and stiffened all native freedom of expression, like some scaly leprosy or elephantiasis, barking and hide-binding the fine natural pulses of the elastic flesh. Another and almost a worse evil has established itself in the prevailing structure of sentences. Every man who has had any experience in writing, knows how natural it is for hurry and fulness of matter to discharge itself by vast sentences, involving clause within clause *ad infinitum* — how difficult it is, and how much a work of time, to break up this huge fasciculus of cycle and epicycle into a graceful succession of sentences, long intermingled with short, each modifying the other, and arising musically by links of spontaneous connection. Now the plethoric form of period, this monster model of sentence, bloated with decomplex intercalations, and exactly repeating the form of syntax which distinguishes an act of Parliament, is the prevailing model

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in newspaper eloquence. Crude undigested masses of suggestion, furnishing rather raw materials for composition and jotting for the memory, than any formal developments of the ideas, describe the quality of writing which *must* prevail in journalism: not from defect of talents, which are at this day of that superior class which may be presumed from the superior importance of the function itself; but from the necessities of hurry and of instant compliance with an instant emergency, granting no possibility for revision, or opening for amended thought, which are evils attached to the flying velocities of public business.

As to structure of sentence, and the periodic involution, *that* scarcely admits of being exemplified in the conversation of those who do not write. But the choice of phraseology is naturally and easily echoed in the colloquial forms of those who surrender themselves to such an influence. To mark in what degree this contagion of bookishness has spread, and how deeply it has moulded the habits of expression in classes naturally the least likely to have been reached by a revolution so artificial in its character, we will report a single record from the memorials of our own experience. Some eight years ago, we had occasion to look for lodgings in a newly-built suburb of London. The mistress of the house, (with respect to whom we have nothing to report more than that she was in the worst sense a vulgar woman, that is, not merely a low-bred person — so much might have been expected from her occupation — but morally vulgar by the evidence of her own complex precautions against fraud, reasonable enough in so dangerous a capital, but not calling for the very ostentatious display of them which

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she obtruded upon us,) was in regular training, it appeared, as a student of newspapers. She had no children: the newspapers were her children. There lay her studies; that branch of learning constituted her occupation, from morning to night: and the following were amongst the words which she — this semibarbarian — poured from her cornucopia during the very few minutes of our interview; which interview was brought to an abrupt issue by mere nervous agitation upon our part. The words, as noted down within an hour of the occasion, and after allowing a fair time for our recovery, were these: — first, 'Category;' secondly, 'predicament;' (where, by the way, from the twofold iteration of the idea — Greek and Roman — it appears that the old lady was 'twice armed;')—thirdly, 'individuality;' fourthly, 'procrastination;' fifthly, 'speaking diplomatically, would not wish to commit herself;' sixthly, 'would spontaneously adapt the several modes of domestication to the reciprocal interests,' &c.; and finally, (which word it was that settled us; we heard it as we reached the topmost stair on the second floor; and, without further struggle against our instincts, round we wheeled, rushed down forty-five stairs, and exploded from the house with a fury causing us to impinge against an obese or protuberant gentleman, and calling for mutual explanations; a result which nothing *could* account for, but a steel bow, or mustachios on the lip of an elderly woman; meantime the fatal word was,) seventhly, 'anteriorly.' Concerning which word we solemnly depose and make affidavit, that neither from man, woman, nor book, had we ever heard it before this unique rencontre with this abominable woman on the staircase. The occasion which

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furnished the excuse for such a word was this: From the staircase window we saw a large shed in the rear of the house: apprehending some nuisance of 'manufacturing industry' in our neighborhood, — 'What's that?' we demanded. Mark the answer: 'A shed; and anteriorly to the existing shed there was ——;' *what* there was, posterity must consent to have wrapt up in darkness, for there came on our nervous seizure, which intercepted further communication. But observe, as a point which took away any gleam of consolation from the case, the total absence of all *malaprop* picturesqueness, that might have defeated its deadly action upon the nervous system. No: it is due to the integrity of *her* disease, and to the completeness of *our* suffering, that we should attest the unimpeachable correctness of her words and of the syntax by which she connected them.

Now, if we could suppose the case that the old household idiom of the land were generally so extinguished amongst us as it was in this particular instance — if we could imagine, as a *universal* result of journalism, that a coarse unlettered woman, having occasion to say, 'this or that stood in such a place before the present shed,' should take as a natural or current formula, 'anteriorly to the existing shed there stood,' &c. — what would be the final effect upon our literature? Pedantry, though it were unconscious pedantry, once steadily diffused through a nation as to the very moulds of its thinking, and the general tendencies of its expression, could not but stiffen the natural graces of composition, and weave fetters about the free movement of human thought. This would interfere as effectually with our power of enjoying much that is

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excellent in our past literature, as it would with our future powers of producing. And such an agency has been too long at work amongst us, not to have already accomplished some part of these separate evils. Amongst women of education, as we have argued above, standing aloof from literature, and less uniformly drawing their intellectual sustenance from newspapers, the deadening effects have been partially counteracted. Here and there, amongst individuals, alive to the particular evils of the age, and watching the very set of the current, there may have been even a more systematic counteraction applied to the mischief. But the great evil in such cases is this — that we cannot see the extent of the changes wrought or being wrought, from having ourselves partaken in them. *Tempora mutantur ;* and naturally, if we could review them with the neutral eye of a stranger, it would be impossible for us not to see the extent of those changes. But our eye is *not* neutral: we also have partaken in the changes ; *et nos mutamur in illis.* And this fact disturbs the power of appreciating those changes. Every one of us would have felt, sixty years ago, that the general tone and coloring of a style was stiff, bookish, pedantic, which, from the habituation of our organs, we now feel to be natural and within the privilege of learned art. Direct objective qualities it is always by comparison easy to measure; but the difficulty commences when we have to combine with this outer measurement of the object another corresponding measurement of the subjective or inner qualities by which we apply the measure; that is, when besides the objects projected to a distance from the spectator, we have to allow for variations or disturbances in the

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very eye which surveys them. The eye cannot see itself; we cannot project from ourselves, and contemplate as an object our own contemplating faculty, or appreciate our own appreciating power. Biases, therefore, or gradual warpings, that have occurred in our critical faculty as applied to style, we cannot allow for; and these biases will unconsciously mask, to our perceptions, an amount of change in the quality of popular style such as we could not easily credit.

Separately from this change for the worse in the drooping idiomatic freshness of our diction, which is a change that has been going on for a century, the other characteristic defect of this age lies in the tumid and tumultuary structure of our sentences. The one change has partly grown out of the other. Ever since a more bookish air was impressed upon composition without much effort by the Latinized and artificial phraseology, by forms of expression consecrated to books, and by 'long-tailed words in *osity* and *ation*,' either because writers felt that already, in this one act of preference shown to the artificial vocabulary, they had done enough to establish a deferential character of regular composition, and on that consideration thought themselves entitled to neglect the combination of their words into sentences and periods; or because there is a real natural sympathy between the Latin phraseology and a Latin structure of sentence; certain it is and remarkable, that our popular style, in the common limited sense of arrangement applied to words, or the syntaxes of sentences, has labored with two faults that might have been thought incompatible: it has been artificial, by artifices peculiarly adapted to the powers of the Latin language, and yet at the very same time

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careless and disordinate. There is a strong idea expressed by the Latin word *inconditus*, *disorganized*, or rather *unorganized*. Now, in spite of its artificial bias, that is the very epithet which will best characterize our newspaper style. To be viewed as susceptible of organization, such periods must already be elaborate and artificial; to be viewed as not having received it, such periods must be careless.

But perhaps the very best illustration of all this will be found in putting the case of English style into close juxtaposition with the style of the French and Germans — our only very important neighbors. As leaders of civilization, as *powers* in an intellectual sense, there are but three nations in Europe — England, Germany, France. As to Spain, and Italy, outlying extremities, they are not moving bodies; they rest upon the past. Russia and North America are the two bulwarks of Christendom — east and west. But the three powers *at the centre* are in all senses the motive forces of civilization. In all things they have the initiation; and they preside.

By this comparison we shall have the advantage of doing what the French express by *s'orienter* — the Germans by *sich orientiren*. Learning one of our bearings on the compass, we shall be able to deduce the rest; and we shall be able to conjecture our valuation as respects the art, by finding our place amongst the artists.

With respect to French style, we can imagine the astonishment of an English author, practised in composition, and with no previous knowledge of French literature, who should first find himself ranging freely amongst a French library. That particular fault of

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style which in English books is all but universal, absolutely has not an existence in the French. Speaking rigorously and to the very letter of the case, we, upon a large experience in French literature, affirm, that it would be nearly impossible (perhaps strictly so) to cite an instance of that cumbrous and unwieldy style which disfigures English composition so extensively. Enough could not be adduced to satisfy the purpose of illustration. And to make a Frenchman sensible of the fault as a possibility, you must appeal to some *translated* model.

But why? The cause of this national immunity from a fault so common everywhere else, and so natural, when we look into the producing occasions, is as much entitled to our notice as the immunity itself. The fault is inevitable, as one might fancy, to two conditions of mind — hurry in the first place, want of art in the second. The French must be liable to these disadvantages as much as their neighbors: by what magic is it that they evade them or neutralize them in the result? The secret lies here; beyond all nations, by constitutional vivacity, the French are a nation of talkers; and the model of their sentences is moulded by that fact. Conversation, which is a luxury for other nations, is for them a necessity; by the very law of their peculiar intellect and of its social training, they are colloquial. Hence it happens, that there are no such people endured or ever heard of in France as *al*loquial wits; people who talk *to* but not *with* a circle; the very finest of their *beaux esprits* must submit to the equities of conversation, and would be crushed summarily as monsters, if they were to seek a selfish mode of

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display, or a privilege of lecturing any audience of a *salon* who had met for purposes of *social* pleasure. '*De monologue*,' as Madame de Staël, in her broken English, described this mode of display when speaking of Coleridge, is so far from being tolerated in France as an accomplishment, that it is not even understood as a disease. This kind of what may be called irresponsible talk, when a man runs on *perpetuo tenore*, not accountable for any opinion to his auditors, open to no contradiction, has sometimes procured for a man in England the affix of *River* to his name; *Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum*. But that has been in cases where the talking impulse was sustained by mere vivacity of animal spirits, without knowledge to support it, and liable to the full weight of Archbishop Huet's sarcasm — that it was a diarrhœa of garrulity, a *flux de bouche*. But in cases like that of Coleridge, where the solitary display, if selfish, is still dignified by a pomp of knowledge, and a knowledge which you feel to have been fused and combined by the genial circumstances of the speaker's position in the centre of an admiring circle, — we English do still recognise the *métier* of a professional talker as a privileged mode of social display. People are asked to come and hear such a performer, as you form a select party to hear Thalberg or Paganini. The thing is understood at least with us; right or wrong, there is an understanding amongst the company that you are not to interrupt the great man of the night. You may prompt him by a question; you may set him in motion; but to begin arguing against him would be felt as not less unseasonable, than to insist on whistling Jim Crow during the *bravuras* and *tours de force* of the great musical artists.

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In France, therefore, from the intense adaptation of the national mind to real colloquial intercourse, for which reciprocation is indispensable, the form of sentence in use is adjusted to that primary condition; brief, terse, simple; shaped to avoid misunderstanding, and to meet the impatience of those who are waiting for their turn. People who write rapidly everywhere write as they talk: it is impossible to do otherwise. Taking a pen into his hand, a man frames his periods exactly as he would do if addressing an audience. So far the Englishman and the Frenchman are upon the same level. Suppose them, therefore, both preparing to speak: an Englishman in such a situation has no urgent motive for turning his thoughts to any other object than the prevailing one of the moment — viz. how best to convey his meaning. That object weighs also with the Frenchman; but he has a previous, a paramount, object to watch — the necessity of avoiding *des longueurs*. The rights, the equities of conversation are but dimly present to the mind of the Englishman. From the mind of a Frenchman they are never absent. To an Englishman, the right of occupying the attention of the company seems to inhere in *things* rather than in person: if the particular subject under discussion should happen to be a grave one, then, in right of *that*, and not by any right of his own, a speaker will seem to an Englishman invested with the privilege of drawing largely upon the attention of a company. But to a Frenchman this right of participation in the talk is a *personal* right, which cannot be set aside by any possible claims in the subject: it passes by necessity to and fro, backwards and forwards, between the

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several persons who are present; and, as in the games of battledore and shuttlecock, or of 'hunt the slipper,' the momentary subject of interest never *can* settle or linger for any length of time in any one individual, without violating the rules of the sport, or suspending its movement. Inevitably, therefore, the structure of sentence must forever be adapted to this primary function of the French national intellect — the function of communicativeness, and to the necessities (for to the French they *are* necessities) of social intercourse.

Hence it is that in French authors, whatever may otherwise be the differences of their minds, or the differences of their themes, uniformly we find the periods short, rapid, unelaborate — Pascal or Helvetius, Condillac or Rousseau, Montesquieu or Voltaire, Buffon or Duclos, — all alike are terse, perspicuous, brief. Even Mirabeau or Chateaubriand, so much modified by foreign intercourse, in this point adhere to their national models. Even Bossuet or Bourdaloue, where the diffusiveness and amplitude of oratory might have been pleaded as a dispensation, are not more licentious in this respect than their compatriots. One rise in every sentence, one gentle descent, — that is the law for French composition; even too monotonously so — and thus it happens that such a thing as a long or an involved sentence could not be produced from French literature, though a sultan were to offer his daughter in marriage to the man who should find it. Whereas now, amongst us English, not only is the too general tendency of our sentences towards hyperbolical length, but it will be found continually, that instead of one rise and one corresponding fall -

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one *arsis* and one *thesis* — there are many. Flux and reflux, swell and cadence, that is the movement for a sentence; but our modern sentences agitate us by rolling fires, after the fashion of those internal earthquakes that, not content with one throe, run along spasmodically like boys playing at what is called 'drake-stone.'

It is not often that a single fault can produce any vast amount of evil. But there are cases where it does; and this is one; the effect of weariness and of repulsion, which may arise from this single vice of unwieldy comprehensiveness in the structure of sentences, cannot better be illustrated than by a frank exposure of what often happens to ourselves, and (as we differ as to this case only by consciously noticing what all feel) must often happen to others. In the evening, when it is natural that we should feel a craving for rest, some book lies near us which is written in a style, clear, tranquil, easy to follow. Just at that moment comes in the wet newspaper, dripping with the dewy freshness of its news; and even in its parliamentary memorials promising so much interest, that, let them be treated in what manner they may merely for the subjects, they are often commandingly attractive. The attraction indeed is but too potent, the interest but too exciting. Yet, after all, many times we lay aside the journal, and we acquiesce in the gentler stimulation of the book. Simply the news we may read; but the discussions, whether direct from the editor, or reported from the Parliament, we refuse or we delay. And why? It is the subject, perhaps you think, it is the great political question — too agitating by the consequences it may happen to involve.

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No. All this, if treated in a winning style, we could bear. It is the effort, the toil, the exertion of mind requisite to follow the discussion through endless and labyrinthine sentences — this it is which compels us to forego the journal, or to lay it aside until the next morning.

Those who are not accustomed to watch the effects of composition upon the feelings, or have had little experience in voluminous reading pursued for weeks, would scarcely imagine how much of downright physical exhaustion is produced by what is technically called the *periodic* style of writing: it is not the length, the *απεραντολογια*, the paralytic flux of words: it is not even the cumbrous involution of parts within parts, separately considered, that bears so heavily upon the attention. It is the suspense, the holding-on, of the mind until what is called the *αποδοσις* or coming round of the sentence commences; this it is which wears out the faculty of attention. A sentence, for example, begins with a series of *ifs;* perhaps a dozen lines are occupied with expanding the conditions under which something is affirmed or denied: here you cannot dismiss and have done with the ideas as you go along; all is hypothetic; all is suspended in air. The conditions are not fully to be understood until you are acquainted with the dependency; you must give a separate attention to each clause of this complex hypothesis, and yet having done *that* by a painful effort, you have done nothing at all; for you must exercise a reacting attention through the corresponding latter section, in order to follow out its relations to all parts of the hypothesis which sustained it. In fact, under the rude yet also artificial character of newspaper

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style, each separate monster period in a vast arch, which, not receiving its keystone, not being locked into self-supporting cohesion, until you nearly reach its close, imposes of necessity upon the unhappy reader all the *onus* of its ponderous weight through the main process of its construction. The continued repetition of so Atlantean an effort soon overwhelms the patience of any reader, and establishes at length that habitual feeling which causes him to shrink from the speculations of journalists, or (which is more likely) to adopt a worse habit than absolute neglect, which we shall notice immediately.

Meantime, as we have compared ourselves on this important point with the French, let us now complete our promise, by noticing our relation in the same point to the Germans. Even on its own account, and without any view to our present purpose, the character of German prose is an object of legitimate astonishment. Whatever is bad in our own ideal of prose style, whatever is repulsive in our own practice, we see there carried to the most outrageous excess. Herod is outheroded, Sternhold is out-sternholded, with a zealotry of extravagance that really seems like wilful burlesque. Lessing, Herder, Paul Richter, and Lichtenberg, with some few beside, either prompted by nature or trained upon foreign models, have avoided the besetting sin of German prose. Any man of distinguished talent, whose attention has been once called steadily to this subject, cannot fail to avoid it. The misfortune of most writers has been, that once occupied with the interest of *things*, and overwhelmed by the embarrassments of disputed *doctrines*, they never advert to any question affecting what they view, by comparison, as

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a trifle. The τὸ *docendum*, the thing to be taught, has availed to obscure or even to annihilate for their eyes every anxiety as to the mode of teaching. And, as one conspicuous example of careless style acts by its authority to create many more, we need not wonder at the results, even when they reach a point of what may be called monstrous. Among ten thousand offenders, who carry their neglect of style even to that point, we would single out Immanuel Kant. Such is the value of his philosophy in some sections, and partially it is so very capable of a lucid treatment, intelligible to the plainest man of reflective habits, that within no long interval we shall certainly see him naturalized amongst ourselves; there are particular applications of his philosophy not contemplated by himself, for which we venture to predict that the Christian student will ultimately be thankful, when the elementary principles have been brought under a clear light of interpretation. Attention will then be forced upon his style, and facts will come forward not credible without experimental proof. For instance, we have lying before us at this moment his *Critik der Practischen Vernunft* in the unpirated edition of Hartnoch — the respectable publisher of all Kant's great works. The text is therefore authentic: and being a 4th edition, (Riga, 1797,) must be presumed to have benefited by the author's careful revision: we have no time for search, but on barely throwing open the book, we see a sentence at pp. 70, 71, exactly covering one whole octavo page of thirty-one lines, each line averaging forty-five to forty-eight letters. Sentences of the same calibre, some even of far larger *bore*, we have observed in this and other works of the same author.

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And it is not the fact taken as an occasional possibility, it is the prevailing character of his style, that we insist on as the most formidable barrier to the study of his writings, and to the progress of what will soon be acknowledged as important in his principles. A sentence is viewed by him, and by most of his countrymen, as a rude mould or elastic form admitting of expansion to any possible extent: it is laid down as a rude outline, and then by superstruction and *epi*-superstruction it is gradually reared to a giddy altitude which no eye can follow. Yielding to his natural impulse of subjoining all additions, or exceptions, or modifications — not in the shape of separate consecutive sentences, but as intercalations and stuffings of one original sentence, Kant might naturally enough have written a book from beginning to end in one vast hyperbolical sentence. We sometimes see an English Act of Parliament which does literally accomplish that end, by an artifice which in law has a purpose and a use. Instead of laying down a general proposition, which is partially false until it has received its proper restraints, the framer of the act endeavors to evade even this momentary falsehood by coupling the restraints with the very primary enunciation of the truth: *e. g.* A. shall be entitled, provided always that he is under the circumstances of *e*, or *i*, or *o*, to the right of X. Thus, even a momentary compliance with the false notion of an absolute unconditional claim to X. is evaded; a truth which is only a conditional truth, is stated as such from the first. There is, therefore, a theoretic use. But what is the practical result? Why, that when you attempt to read an Act of Parliament where the exceptions, the secondary exceptions to the

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exceptions, the limitations and the sublimitations, descend *seriatim*, by a vast scale of dependencies, the mind finds itself overtasked: the energy of the most energetic begins to droop; and so inevitable is that result, that Mr. Pitt, a minister unusually accomplished for such process by constitution of mind and by practice, publicly avowed his inability to follow so trying a conflict with technical embarrassments. He declared himself to be lost in the labyrinth of clauses: the Ariadne's clue was wanting for his final extrication: and he described his situation at the end with the simplicity natural to one who was no charlatan, and sought for no reputation by the tricks of a funambulist: 'In the crowd of things excepted and counter-excepted, he really ceased to understand the main point — what it was that the law allowed, and what it was that it disallowed.'

We might have made our readers merry with the picture of German prose; but we must not linger. It is enough to say, that it offers the counterpole to the French style. Our own popular style, and (what is worse) the *tendency* of our own, is to the German extreme. For those who read German there is this advantage — that German prose, as written by the mob of authors, presents, as in a Brobdignagian mirror, the most offensive faults of our own.

But these faults — are they in practice so wearisome and exhausting as we have described them? Possibly not; and, where that happens to be the case, let the reader ask himself if it is not by means of an evasion worse in its effects than any fault of style could ever prove in its most exaggerated form. Shrinking, through long experience, from the plethoric form of cumulation

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and 'periodic' writing in which the journalist supports or explains his views, every man who puts a business value upon his time, slips naturally into a trick of short-hand reading. It is more even by the effort and tension of mind required, than by the mere loss of time, that most readers are repelled from the habit of careful reading. An evil of modern growth is met by a modern remedy. Every man gradually learns an art of catching at the leading words, and the cardinal or hinge-joints of transition, which proclaim the general course of a writer's speculation. Now it is very true, and is sure to be objected — that, where so much is certain to prove mere iteration and teasing tautology, little can be lost by this or any other process of abridgment. Certainly, as regards the particular subject concerned, there may be no room to apprehend a serious injury. Not there, not in any direct interest, but in a far larger interest — indirect for the moment, but the most direct and absolute of all interests for an intellectual being, the reader suffers a permanent debilitation. He acquires a factitious propensity, he forms an incorrigible habit of desultory reading. Now, to say of a man's knowledge, that it will be shallow, or (which is worse than shallow) will be erroneous and insecure in its foundations, is to say little of such a habit: it is by reaction upon a man's faculties, it is by the effects reflected upon his judging and reasoning powers, that loose habits of reading tell eventually. And these are durable effects. Even as respects the minor purpose of information, better it is, by a thousand-fold, to have read threescore of books (chosen judiciously) with severe attention, than to have raced through the library of the Vatican at a newspaper pace.

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But, as respects the final habits acquired, habits of thinking coherently, and of judging soundly — better that a man should have not read one line throughout his life, than have travelled through the journals of Europe by this random process of 'reading short.'

Yet, by this Parthian habit of aiming at full gallop — of taking flying shots at conspicuous marks, and, like Parthians also, directing their chance arrows whilst retreating, and revolting with horror from a direct approach to the object, — thus it is, that the young and the flexible are trained amongst us under the increasing tyranny of journalism. A large part of the evil, therefore, belongs to style; for it is this which repels readers, and enforces the short-hand process of desultory reading. A large part of the evil, therefore, is of a nature to receive a remedy.

It is with a view to that practical part of the extensive evil, that we have shaped our present notice of popular style, as made operative amongst ourselves. One single vice of periodic syntax, a vice unknown to the literature of Greece, and, until Paterculus, even of Rome, (although the language of Rome was so naturally adapted to that vice,) has with us counterbalanced all possible vices of any other order. Simply by the vast sphere of its agency for evil, in the habits of mind which it produces and supports, such a vice merits a consideration which would else be disproportionate. Yet, at the same time, it must not be forgotten, that if the most operative of all vices, after all it is but one. What are the others?

It is a fault, amongst many faults, of such works as we have on this subject of style — that they collect the list of qualities, good or bad, to which composition is

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liable, not under any principle from which they might be deduced *à priori*, so as to be assured that all had been enumerated, but by a tentative groping, a mere conjectural estimate. The word *style* has with us a twofold meaning; one sense, the narrow one, expressing the mere *synthesis onomatōn*, the syntaxis or combination of words into sentences; the other of far wider extent, and expressing all possible relations that can arise between thoughts and words — the total effect of a writer, as derived from manner. Style may be viewed as an *organic* thing and as a *mechanic* thing. By organic, we mean that which, being acted upon, reacts — and which propagates the communicated power without loss. By mechanic, that which, being impressed with motion, cannot throw it back without loss, and therefore soon comes to an end. The human body is an elaborate system of organs; it is sustained by organs. But the human body is exercised as a machine, and, as such, may be viewed in the arts of riding, dancing, leaping, &c., subject to the laws of motion and equilibrium. Now, the use of words is an organic thing, in so far as language is connected with thoughts, and modified by thoughts. It is a mechanic thing, in so far as words in combination determine or modify each other. The science of style, as an organ of thought, of style in relation to the ideas and feelings, might be called the *organology* of style. The science of style, considered as a machine, in which words act upon words, and through a particular grammar, might be called the *mechanology* of style. It is of little importance by what name these two functions of composition are expressed. But it is of great importance not to confound the functions; that function

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by which style maintains a commerce with thought, and that by which it chiefly communicates with grammar and with words. A pedant only will insist upon the names — but the distinction in the ideas, under some name, can be neglected only by the man who is careless of logic.

We know not how far we may be ever called upon to proceed with this discussion: if it should happen that we were, an interesting field of questions would lie before us for the first part, (the organology.) It would lead us over the ground trodden by the Greek and Roman rhetoricians; and over those particular questions which have arisen by the contrast between the circumstances of the ancients and our own since the origin of printing. Punctuation, trivial as such an innovation may seem, was the product of typography; and it is interesting to trace the effects upon style even of that one slight addition to the resources of logic. Previously, a man was driven to depend for his security against misunderstanding upon the pure virtue of his syntax. Miscollocation or dislocation of related words disturbed the whole sense: its least effect was to give no sense; often it gave a dangerous sense. Now, punctuation was an artificial machinery for maintaining the integrity of the sense against all mistakes of the writer; and, as one consequence, it withdrew the energy of men's anxieties from the natural machinery, which lay in just and careful arrangement. Another and still greater machinery of art for the purpose of maintaining the sense, and with the effect of relaxing the care of the writer, lay in the exquisitely artificial structure of the Latin language, which, by means of its terminal

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forms, indicated the arrangement, and referred the proper predicate to the proper subject, spite of all that affectation or negligence could do to disturb the series of the logic or the succession of the syntax. Greek, of course, had the same advantage in kind, but not in degree; and thence rose some differences which have escaped all notice of rhetoricians. Here also would properly arise the question started by Charles Fox, (but probably due originally to the conversation of some far subtler friend, such as Edmund Burke,) how far the practice of foot-notes — a practice purely modern in its *form* — is reconcilable with the laws of just composition; and whether in virtue, though not in form, such foot-notes did not exist for the ancients, by an evasion we could point out. The question is clearly one which grows out of style in its relations to thought — how far, viz., such an excrescence as a note argues that the sentence to which it is attached has not received the benefit of a full development for the conception involved; whether if thrown into the furnace again and re-melted, it might not be so recast as to absorb the redundancy which had previously flowed over into a note. Under this head would fall not only all the differential questions of style and composition between us and the ancients, but also the questions of merit as fairly distributed amongst the moderns compared with each other. The French, as we recently insisted, undoubtedly possess one vast advantage over all other nations in the good taste which governs the arrangement of their sentences; in the simplicity (a strange pretension to make for anything French) of the modulation under which their thoughts flow; in the absence of all

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cumbrous involution, and in the quick succession of their periods. In reality this invaluable merit tends to an excess; and the *style coupé* as opposed to the *style soutenu*, flippancy opposed to gravity, the subsultory to the continuous, these are the two frequent extremities to which the French manner betrays men. Better, however, to be flippant, than, by a revolting form of tumor and perplexity, to lead men into habits of intellect such as result from the modern vice of English style. Still, with all its practical value, it is evident that the intellectual merits of the French style are but small. They are chiefly negative, in the first place; and, secondly, founded in the accident of their colloquial necessities. The law of conversation has prescribed the model of their sentences; and in that law there is quite as much of self-interest at work as of respect for equity. *Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.* Give and take is the rule, and he who expects to be heard must condescend to listen; which necessity, for both parties, binds over both to be brief. Brevity so won could at any rate have little merit; and it is certain that, for profound thinking, it must sometimes be a hinderance. In order to be brief, a man must take a short sweep of view: his range of thought cannot be extensive; and such a rule, applied to a general method of thinking, is fitted rather to aphorisms and maxims as upon a known subject, than to any process of investigation as upon a subject yet to be fathomed. Advancing still further into the examination of style as the organ of thinking, we should find occasion to see the prodigious defects of the French in all the higher qualities of prose composition. One advantage, for a practical purpose

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of life, is sadly counterbalanced by numerous faults, many of which are faults of *stamina*, lying not in any corrigible defects, but in such as imply penury of thinking, from radical inaptitude in the thinking faculty to connect itself with the feeling, and with the creative faculty of the imagination. There are many other researches belonging to this subtlest of subjects, affecting both the logic and the ornaments of style, which would fall under the head of organology. But for instant practical use, though far less difficult for investigation, yet, for that reason, far more tangible and appreciable, would be all the suggestions proper to the other head of mechanology. Half a dozen rules for evading the most frequently recurring forms of awkwardness, of obscurity, of misproportion, and of double meaning, would do more to assist a writer in practice, laid under some necessity of hurry, than volumes of general disquisition. It makes us blush to add, that even grammar is so little of a perfect attainment amongst us, that with two or three exceptions, (one being Shakspeare, whom some affect to consider as belonging to a semi-barbarous age,) we have never seen the writer, through a circuit of prodigious reading, who has not sometimes violated the accidence or the syntax of English grammar.

Whatever becomes of our own possible speculations, we shall conclude with insisting on the growing necessity of style as a practical interest of daily life. Upon subjects of public concern, and in proportion to that concern, there will always be a suitable (and as letters extend, a growing) competition. Other things being equal, or appearing to be equal, the determining principle for the public choice will lie in the style.

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Of a German book, otherwise entitled to respect, it was said — *er lässt sich nicht lesen*, it does not permit itself to be read: such and so repulsive was the style. Among ourselves, this has long been true of newspapers: they do not suffer themselves to be read *in extenso*, and they are read short — with what injury to the mind may be guessed. The same style of reading, once largely practised, is applied universally. To this special evil an improvement of style would apply a special redress. The same improvement is otherwise clamorously called for by each man's interest of competition. Public luxury, which is gradually consulted by everything else, must at length be consulted in style.

PART II.

It is a natural resource, that whatsoever we find it difficult to investigate as a result, we endeavor to follow as a growth; failing analytically to probe its nature, historically we seek relief to our perplexities by tracing its origin. Not able to assign the elements of its theory, we endeavor to detect them in the stages of its development. Thus, for instance, when any feudal institution (be it Gothic, Norman, or Anglo-Saxon) eludes our deciphering faculty, from the imperfect records of its use and operation, then we endeavor conjecturally to amend our knowledge, by watching the circumstances in which that institution arose; and from the necessities of the age, as indicated by facts which have survived, we are sometimes able to trace, through all their corresponding stages of

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growth, the natural succession of arrangements which such necessities would be likely to prescribe.

This mode of oblique research, where a more direct one is denied, we find to be the only one in our power. And, with respect to the liberal arts, it is even more true than with respect to laws or institutions; because remote ages, widely separated, differ much more in their pleasures than they can ever do in their social necessities. To make property safe and life sacred — that is everywhere a primary purpose of law. But the intellectual amusements of men are so different, that the very purposes and elementary functions of these amusements are different. They point to different ends as well as different means. The drama, for instance, in Greece, connects itself with religion; in other ages, religion is the power most in resistance to the drama. Hence, and because the elder and ruder ages are most favorable to a ceremonial and mythological religion, we find the tragedy of Greece defunct before the literary age arose. Aristotle's era may be taken as the earliest era of refinement and literary development. But Aristotle wrote his Essay on the Greek Tragedy just a century after the *chefs d'œuvre* of that tragedy had been published.

If, therefore, it is sometimes requisite for the proper explanation even of a law or legal usage, that we should go to its history, not looking for a sufficient key to its meaning in the mere analogies of our own social necessities, much more will that be requisite in explaining an art or a mode of intellectual pleasure. Why it was that the ancients had no landscape painting, is a question deep almost as the mystery of life, and harder of solution than all the problems of jurispru-

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dence combined. What causes moulded the tragedy of the ancients could hardly be guessed, if we did not happen to know its history and mythologic origin. And with respect to what is called *Style*, not so much as a sketch — as an outline — as a hint could be furnished towards the earliest speculations upon this subject, if we should overlook the historical facts connected with its earliest development.

What was it that first produced into this world that celebrated thing called *Prose?* It was the bar, it was the hustings, it was the *Bema* (το βημα). What Gibbon and most historians of the Mussulmans have rather absurdly called the pulpit of the Caliphs, should rather be called the rostrum, the Roman military *suggestus*, or Athenian *bema*. The fierce and generally illiterate Mahometan harangued his troops; preach he could not; he had no subject for preaching.[3] Now this function of man, in almost all states of society, the function of public haranguing was for the Pagan man, who had no printing-press, more of a mere necessity, through every mode of public life, than it is for the modern man of Christian light: for as to the modern man of Mahometan twilight, his perfect bigotry denies him this characteristic resource of Christian energies. Just four centuries have we of the Cross propagated our light by this memorable invention; just four centuries have the slaves of the Crescent clung to their darkness by rejecting it. Christianity signs her name; Islamism makes her mark. And the great doctors of the Mussulmans, take their stand precisely where Jack Cade took *his* a few years after printing had been discovered. Jack and they both make it felony to be found with a spelling-book, and sorcery to deal with syntax.

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Yet with these differences, all of us alike, Pagan, Mussulman, Christian, have practised the arts of public speaking as the most indispensable resource of public administration and of private intrigue. Whether the purpose were to pursue the interests of legislation, or to conduct the business of jurisprudence, or to bring the merits of great citizens pathethically before their countrymen; or (if the state were democratic enough) oftentimes to explain the conduct of the executive government — oftentimes, also, to prosecute a scheme of personal ambition; whether the audience were a mob, a senate, a judicial tribunal, or an army; equally (though not in equal degrees), for the Pagan of twenty-five hundred years back, and for us moderns, the arts of public speaking, and consequently of prose as opposed to metrical composition, have been the capital engine — the one great intellectual machine — of civil life.

This, to some people, may seem a matter of course; 'would you have men speak in rhyme?' We answer, that when society comes into a state of refinement, the total uses of language are developed in common with other arts; but originally, and whilst man was in his primitive condition of simplicity, it must have seemed an unnatural, nay, an absurd, thing to speak in prose. For in those elder days, the sole justifying or exciting cases for a public harangue, would be cases connected with impassioned motives. Rare they would be, as they had need to be, where both the 'hon. gentleman' who moves, and his 'hon. friend' who seconds, are required to speak in Trimeter Iambic. Hence the necessity that the oracles should be delivered in verse. Who ever heard of a prose oracle? And hence, as

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Grecian taste expanded, the disagreeable criticisms whispered about in Athens as to the coarse quality of the verses that proceeded from Delphi. It was like bad Latin from Oxford. Apollo himself, to turn out of his own temple, in the very age of Sophocles, such Birmingham hexameters as sometimes astonished Greece, was like our English court keeping a Stephen Duck, the thresher, for the national poet-laureate, at a time when Pope was fixing an era in the literature. Metre fell to a discount in such learned times. But, in itself, metre must always have been the earliest vehicle for public enunciations of truth among men, for these obvious reasons: — 1. That, if metre rises above the standard of ordinary household life, so must any truth of importance and singularity enough to challenge a public utterance. 2. That, because religious communications will always have taken a metrical form, by a natural association of feeling, whatsoever is invested with a privileged character will seek something of religious sanction, by assuming the same external shape; and 3. That expressions, or emphatic verbal forms, which are naturally courted for the sake of pointed effect, receive a justification from metre, as being already a departure from common usage to begin with, whereas, in plain prose, they would appear so many affectations. Metre is naturally and necessarily adopted in cases of impassioned themes, for the very obvious reason, that rhythmus is both a cause of impassioned feeling, an ally of such feeling, and a natural effect of it; but upon other subjects *not* impassioned, metre is also a subtle ally, because it serves to introduce, and to reconcile with our sense of propriety, various arts of condensation,

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antithesis, and other rhetorical effects, which, without the metre (as a key for harmonizing them) would strike the feelings as unnatural, or as full of affectation. Interrogations, for example, passionate ejaculations, &c., seem no more than natural, when metre (acting as a key) has attuned and prepared the mind for such effects. The metre raises the tone of coloring, so as to introduce richer tints, without shocking or harshly jarring upon the presiding key, when without this semi-conscious pitching of the expectations, the sensibility would have been revolted. Hence, for the very earliest stages of society, it will be mere nature that prompts men to metre: it is a mode of inspiration — it is a promise of something preternatural; and less than preternatural cannot be any possible emergency that should call for a public address. Only great truths could require a man to come forward as a spokesman: he is then a sort of interpreter between God and man, his creature.

At first, therefore, it is mere nature which prompts metre. Afterwards, as truth begins to enlarge itself — as truth loses something of its sanctity by descending amongst human details — that mode of exalting it, and of courting attention, is dictated by artifice, which originally was a mere necessity of nature raised above herself. For these reasons, it is certain that men, challenging high authentic character, will continue to speak by metre for many generations after it has ceased to be a mere voice of habitual impulse. Whatsoever claims an oracular authority, will take the ordinary external form of an oracle. And after it has ceased to be a badge of inspiration, metre will be retained as a badge of professional distinction; — Py-

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thagoras, for instance, within five centuries of Christ, Thales or Theognis, will adopt metre out of a secondary prudence; Orpheus and the elder Sibyl, out of an original necessity.

Those people are, therefore, mistaken who imagine that prose is either a natural or a possible form of composition in early states of society. It is such truth only as ascends from the earth, not such as descends from heaven, which can ever assume an unmetrical form. Now, in the earliest states of society, all truth that has any interest or importance for man will connect itself with heaven. If it does not originally come forward in that sacred character, if it does not borrow its importance from its sanctity; then, by an inverse order, it will borrow a sanctity from its importance. Even agricultural truth, even the homeliest truths of rural industry, brought into connection with religious inspiration, will be exalted (like the common culinary utensils in the great vision of the Jewish prophet) and transfigured into vessels of glorious consecration. All things in this early stage of social man are meant mysteriously, have allegoric values; and week-day man moves amongst glorified objects. So that if any doctrine, principle, or system of truth, should call for communication at all, infallibly the communication will take the tone of a revelation; and the holiness of a revelation will express itself in the most impassioned form — perhaps with accompaniments of music, but certainly with metre.

Prose, therefore, strange as it may seem to say so, was something of a discovery. If not great invention, at least great courage would be required for the man who should first swim without the bladders of metre.

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It is all very easy talking, when you and your ancestors, for fifty generations back, have talked prose. But that man must have had *triplex æs* about his *præcordia*, who first dared to come forward with pure prose to a people who had never heard anything but metre. It was like the case of the first physician who dared to lay aside the ample wig and gold-headed cane. All the Jovian terrors of his professional being laid aside, he was thrown upon his mere natural resources of skill and good sense. Who was the first lion-hearted man that ventured to make sail in this frail boat of prose? We believe the man's name is reputed to have been Pherecydes. But as nothing is less worth remembering than the mere hollow shell of a name, where all the pulp and the kernel is gone, we shall presume Herodotus to have been the first respectable artist in prose. And, what was this worthy man's view of prose? From the way in which he connected his several books or 'fyttes' with the names of the muses, and from the romantic style of his narratives, as well as from his using a dialect which had certainly become a poetic dialect, in literary Greece, it is pretty clear that Herodotus stood, and meant to stand, on that isthmus between the regions of poetry and blank unimpassioned prose, which in modern literature is occupied by such works as *Mort d'Arthur*. In Thucydides, we see the first exhibition of stern philosophic prose. And, considering the very brief interval between the two writers, who stand related to each other, in point of time, pretty much as Dryden and Pope, it is quite impossible to look for the solution of their characteristic differences in the mere graduations of social development. Pericles, as a young man, would most certainly ask Hero-

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dotus to dinner, if business or curiosity ever drew that amiable writer to Athens. As an elderly man, Pericles must often have seen Thucydides at his levees; although by that time the sacrifice of his 'social pleasure ill exchanged for power,' may have abridged his opportunity of giving 'feeds' to literary men. But will anybody believe that the mere advance of social refinement, within the narrow period of one man's public life, could bring about so marvellous a change, as that the friend of his youth should naturally write very much in the spirit of Sir John Mandeville, and the friend of his old age, like Machiavel or Gibbon? No, no; the difference between these two writers does not reflect the different aspects of literary Greece at two eras so slightly removed, too great to be measured by that scale; as though those of the picturesque Herodotus were a splendid semi-barbarous generation, those of the meditative Thucydides, speculative, political, experimental, — but we must look to subjective differences of taste and temperament in the men. The men, by nature, and by powerful determination of original sensibility, belong to different orders of intellect. Herodotus was the Froissart of antiquity. He was the man that should have lived to record the Crusades. Thucydides, on the other hand, was obviously the Tacitus of Greece, who (had he been privileged to benefit by some metempsychosis dropping him into congenial scenes of modern history) would have made his election for the wars of the French League, or for our Parliamentary war, or for the colossal conflicts which grew out of the French Revolution. The one was the son of nature, fascinated by the mighty powers of chance

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or of tragic destiny, as they are seen in elder times moulding the form of empires, or training the currents of revolutions. The other was the son of political speculation, delighting to trace the darker agencies which brood in the mind of man — the subtle motives, the combinations, the plots which gather in the brain of 'dark viziers,' when entrusted with the fate of millions, and the nation-wielding tempests which move at the bidding of the orator.

But these subjective differences were not all; they led to objective differences, by determining each writer's mind to a separate object. Does any man fancy that these two writers imagined, each for himself, the same audience? Or again, that each represented his own audience as addressed from the same station? The earlier of the two, full of those qualities which fit a man for producing an effect as an artist, manifestly comes forward in a theatrical character, and addresses his audience from a theatrical station. Is it readers whom he courts? No, but auditors. Is it the literary body whom he addresses — a small body everywhere? No, but the public without limitation. Public! but what public? Not the public of Lacedæmon, drunk with the gloomy insolence of self-conceit — not the public of Athens, amiably vain, courteous, affable, refined: No, it is the public of universal Hellas, an august congress representing the total civilization of the earth: so that of any man not known at Olympia, prince, emperor, whatever he might call himself, if he were not present in person or by proxy, you might warrantably affirm that he was *homo ignorabilis* — a person of whose existence nobody was bound to take notice; a man to be *ignored* by a grand jury. This

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representative *champ de Mai*, Herodotus addressed. And in what character did he address it? What character did he ascribe to the audience? What character did he assume to himself? Them he addressed sometimes in their general character of human beings; but still having a common interest in a central net-work of civilization, investing a certain ring-fence, beginning in Sicily and Carthage, whence it ran round through Lybia, Egypt, Syria, Persia, the Ionian belt or zone, and terminating in the majestic region of *Men* — the home of liberty — the Pharos of truth and intellectual power — the very region in which they were all at that moment assembled. There was such a collective body dimly recognized at times by the ancients, as corresponds to our modern Christendom, and having some unity of possible interest by comparison with the unknown regions of Scythias, Indias, and Ethiopias, lying in a far wider circle beyond; regions that, from their very obscurity, and from the utter darkness of their exterior relations, must at times have been looked to with eyes of anxiety — as permanently harboring that possible deluge of savage eruption which, about one hundred and fifty years after, did actually swallow up the Grecian colony of Bactria, (or Bokhara,) as founded by Alexander; swallowed it so suddenly and so effectually, that merely the blank fact of its tragical catastrophe has reached posterity. It was surprised probably in one night, like Pompeii by Vesuvius; or, like the planet itself by Noah's flood. Or more nearly its fate resembled those starry bodies which have been seen, traced, recorded, fixed in longitude and latitude for generations; and then suddenly are observed to be *missing* by some of our wandering telescopes that

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keep watch and ward over the starry heavens. The agonies of a perishing world have been going on; but all is bright and silent in the heavenly host. Infinite space has swallowed up the infinite agonies. Perhaps the only record of Bactria was the sullen report of some courier from Susa, who would come back with his letters undelivered; simply reporting that on reaching such a ferry on some nameless river, or such an outpost upon a heath, he found it in possession of a fierce unknown race — the ancestors of future Affghans or Tartars.

Such a catastrophe, as menacing by possibility the whole of civilization, and under that hypothetical peril as giving even to Greece herself an interest in the stability even of Persia her great enemy, a great resisting mass interjacent between Greece and the unknown enemies to the far north-east, or east, could not but have mixed occasionally with Greek anticipations for the future; and in a degree quite inappreciable by us who know the geographical limits of Asia. To the ancients, these were by possibility, in a strict sense, infinite. The terror from the unknown Scythians of the world was certainly vague and indistinct; but, if that disarmed the terror or broke its sting, assuredly the very same cause would keep it alive: for the peril would often swell upon the eye, merely from its uncertain limits. Far oftener, however, those glorious certainties revolved upon the Grecian imagination which presented Persia in the character of her enemy, than those remote possibilities which might connect her as a common friend against some horrid enemy from the infinite deserts of Asia. In this character it was that Herodotus at times addressed the assembled

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Greece, at whose bar he stood. That the intensity of this patriotic idea intermitted at times; that it was suffered to slumber through entire books; this was but an artist's management which caused it to swell upon the ear all the more sonorously, more clamorously, more terrifically, when the lungs of the organ filled once more with breath, when the trumpet stop was opened, and the 'foudroyant' style of the organist commenced the hailstone chorus from Marathon. Here came out the character in which Herodotus appeared. The *Iliad* had taken Greece as she was during the building of the first temple at Jerusalem — in the era of David and Solomon — a thousand years before Christ. The eagle's plume in her cap at that era was derived from Asia. It was the Troad, it was Asia that in those days constituted the great enemy of Greece. Greece universal had been confederated against the Asia of that day, and, after an Iliad of woes, had triumphed. But now another era of five hundred years has passed since Troy. Again there has been an universal war raging between Greece and a great foreign potentate. Again this enemy of Greece is called Asia. But what Asia? The Asia of the *Iliad* was a petty maritime Asia. But Asia now means Persia; and Persia, taken in combination with its dependences of Syria and Egypt, means the world, ἡ οἰκουμένη. The frontier line of the Persian empire 'marched' or confined with the Grecian; but now so vast was the revolution effected by Cyrus, that, had not the Persians been withheld by their dismal bigotry from cultivating maritime facilities, the Greeks must have sunk under the enormous power now brought to bear upon them. At one blow the whole territory of what is now Turkey

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in Asia, viz. the whole of Anatolia and of Armenia, had been extinguished as a neutral and interjacent force for Greece. At one blow, by the battle of Thymbra, the Persian armies had been brought nearer by much more than a thousand miles to the gates of Greece.

That danger it is necessary to conceive, in order to to conceive that subsequent triumph. Herodotus — whose family and nearest generation of predecessors must have trembled after the thoughtless insult offered to Sardis, under the expectation of the vast revenge prepared by the great king — must have had his young imagination filled and dilated with the enormous display of Oriental power, and been thus prepared to understand the terrific collisions of the Persian forces with those of Greece. He had heard in his travels how the glorious result was appreciated in foreign lands. He came back to Greece with a twofold freight of treasures. He had two messages for his country. One was — a report of all that was wonderful in foreign lands; all that was interesting from its novelty or its vast antiquity; all that was regarded by the natives for its sanctity, or by foreigners with amazement, as a measure of colossal power in mechanics. And these foreign lands, we must remember, constituted the total world to a Greek. Rome was yet in her infant days, unheard of beyond Italy. Egypt and the other dependencies of Persia composed the total map south of Greece. Greece, with the Mediterranean islands, and the eastern side of the Adriatic, together with Macedon and Thrace, made up the world of Europe. Asia, which had not yet received the narrow limitation imposed upon that word by Rome, was

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co-extensive with Persia; and it might be divided into Asia *cis*-Tigritana, and Asia *trans*-Tigritana; the Euxine and the Caspian were the boundaries to the north; and to one advancing further, the Oxus was the northern boundary, and the Indus the eastern. The Punjab, as far as the river Sutlege, that is, up to our present British cantonments at Ludiana, was indistinctly supposed to be within the jurisdiction of the Great King. Probably he held the whole intervening territory of the late Runjeet Singh, as now possessed by the Sikhs. And beyond these limits all was a mere path of ideal splendor, or a dull repetition of monotonous barbarism.

The report which personal travels enabled Herodotus to make of this extensive region, composing neither more nor less than the total map of the terraqueous globe as it was then supposed to exist, (all the rest being a mere Nova Zembla in their eyes,) was one of two revelations which the great traveller had to lay at the feet of Greece. The other was a connected narrative of their great struggle with the King of Persia. The earth bisected itself into two parts — Persia and Greece. All that was not Persia was Greece: all that was not Greece was Persia. The Greek traveller was prepared to describe the one section to the other section; and having done this, to relate in a connected shape the recent tremendous struggle of the one section with the other. Here was Captain Cook fresh from his triple circumnavigation of the world: here was Mungo Park fresh from the Niger and Timbuctoo: here was Bruce, fresh from the coy fountains of the Nile: here was Phipps, Franklin, Parry, from the Arctic circle: here was Leo Africanus from Moorish

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palaces: here was Mandeville from Prester John, from the Cham of Tartary, and from the golden cities of Hindostan; from Agra and Lahore of the Great Mogul. This was one side of the medal; and on the other was the patriotic historian who recorded what all had heard by fractions, but none in the whole series. Now, if we consider how rare was either character in ancient times, how difficult it was to travel where no license made it safe, where no preparations in roads, inns, carriages, made it convenient; that even five centuries in advance of this era, little knowledge was generally circulated of any region, unless so far as it had been traversed by the Roman legions; considering the vast credulity of the audience assembled — a gulf capable of swallowing mountains; and, on the other hand, that here was a man fresh from the Pyramids and the Nile, from Tyre, from Babylon, and the temple of Belus — a traveller who had gone in with his sickle to a harvest yet untouched — that this same man, considered as an historian, spoke of a struggle with which the earth was still agitated; that the people who had triumphed so memorably in this war, happened to be the same people who were then listening; that the leaders in this glorious war, whose names had already passed into spiritual powers, were the fathers of the present audience; combining into one picture all these circumstances — one must admit that no such meeting between giddy expectation, and the very excess of power to meet its most clamorous calls, is likely to have occurred before or since upon this earth. Hither had assembled people from the most inland and most illiterate parts of Greece; people that would have settled a pension for life upon any man who would

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have described to them so much as a crocodile or ichneumon. To these people, the year of his public recitation would be the meridian year of their lives. He saw that the whole scene would become almost a dramatic work of art; in the mere gratification of their curiosity, the audience might be passive and neutral; in the history of the war, they became almost actors, as in a dramatic scene. This scenical position could not escape the traveller-historian. His work was recited with the exaggeration that belongs to scenic art. It was read probably with gesticulations by one of those thundering voices, which Aristophanes calls a 'damnable' voice, from its ear-piercing violence.

Prose is a thing so well known to all of us, most of our 'little accounts' from shoemakers, dress-makers, &c. being made out in prose — most of our sorrows and of our joys having been communicated to us through prose, and very few indeed through metre, (unless on St. Valentine's day,) that its further history, after leaving its original Olympic cradle, must be interesting to everybody. Who were they that next took up the literary use of Prose? Confining our notice to people of celebrity, we may say that the House of Socrates (*Domus Socratica* is the expression of Horace) were those who next attempted to popularize Greek prose; viz. the old gentleman himself, the founder of the concern, and his two apprentices, Plato and Xenophon. We acknowledge a sneaking hatred towards the whole household, founded chiefly on the intense feeling we entertain that all three were humbugs. We own the stony impeachment. Aristotle, who may be looked upon as literary grandson to Socrates, is quite a different person. But for the rest we cherish a sentimental

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(may we call it a Platonic?) disgust. As relates to the style, however, in which they have communicated their philosophy, one feature of peculiarity is too remarkable to pass without comment. Some years ago, in one of our four or five Quarterly Reviews, (Theological it was, Foreign, or else Westminster,) a critical opinion was delivered with respect to a work of Coleridge's which opens a glimpse into the true philosophy of prose composition. It was not a very good-natured opinion in that situation, since it was no more true of Coleridge than it is of every other man who adopts the same aphoristic form of expression for his thoughts; but it was eminently just. Speaking of Coleridge's 'Aphorisms,' the reviewer observed — that this detached and insulated form of delivering thoughts was, in effect, an evasion of all the difficulties connected with composition. Every man as he walks through the streets, may contrive to jot down an independent thought; a short-hand memorandum of a great truth. So far as that purpose is concerned, even in tumultuous London.

'Purse sunt platese, nihil ut meditantibus obstet.'

Standing on one leg you may accomplish this. The labor of composition begins when you have to put your separate threads of thought into a loom; to weave them into a continuous whole; to connect, to introduce them; to blow them out or expand them; to carry them to a close. All this evil is evaded by the aphoristic form. This one remark, we repeat, lifts up a corner of that curtain which hangs over the difficult subjects of style and composition. Indicating what is *not* in one form, it points to what *is* in others. It was an original re-

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mark, we doubt not, to the reviewer. But it is too weighty and just to have escaped meditative men in former times; and accordingly the very same remark will be found one hundred and fifty years ago expanded in the *Huetiana*.

But what relation has this remark to the House of Socrates? Did *they* write by aphorisms? No, certainly; but they did what labors with the same radical defect, considered in relation to the true difficulties of composition. Let us dedicate a paragraph to these great dons of literature. If we have any merely English scholars amongst our readers, it may be requisite first to inform them that Socrates himself wrote nothing. He was too much occupied with his talking — 'ambitiosâ loquelâ.' In this respect, Socrates differed, as in some others that we could mention, from the late Mr. Coleridge — who found time both for talking and for writing at the least ten volumes octavo. From the pupils of Socrates it is that we collect his pretended philosophy; and as there were only two of these pupils who published, and as one of them intensely contradicts the other, it would be found a hard matter at *Nisi Prius* to extract any verdict as to what it was that constituted the true staple of the Socratic philosophy. We fear that any jury, who undertook that question, would finally be carted to the bounds of the county, and shot into the adjacent county like a ton of coals. For Xenophon uniformly introduces the worthy henpecked philosopher as prattling innocent nothings, more limpid than small beer; whilst Plato never lets him condescend to any theme below those of Hermes Trismegistus, or Thomas Aquinas. One or other must be a liar. And the manner of the philosopher, under

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these two Boswellian reporters, is not less different than his matter: with Xenophon, he reminds us much of an elderly hen, superannuated a little, performing 'the hen's march,' and clucking vociferously; with Plato, he seems much like a deep-mouthed hound in a chase after some unknown but perilous game; much as such a hound is described by Wordsworth ranging over the aërial heights of Mount Righi, his voice at times muffled by mighty forests, and then again swelling as he emerges upon the Alpine breezes; whilst the vast intervals between the local points from which the intermitting voice ascends, proclaim the storm-like pace at which he travels. In Plato, there is a gloomy grandeur at times from the elementary mysteries of man's situation and origin, snatches of music from some older and Orphic philosophy, which impress a vague feeling of solemnity towards the patriarch of the school, though you can seldom trace his movement through all this high and vapory region; you would be happy, therefore, to believe that there had been one word of truth in ascribing such colloquies to Socrates; but how can that be, when you recollect the philosophic *vappa* of Xenophon, seems to pass the deciphering power of Œdipus.

Now, this body of inexplicable discord between the two evangelists of Socrates, as to the whole sources from which he drew his philosophy, as to the very wells from which he raised it, and the mode of medicating the draught, makes it the more worthy of remark that both should have obstinately adopted the same disagreeable form of composition. Both exhibit the whole of their separate speculations under the form of dialogue. It is always Socrates and Crito, or Socrates

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and Phædrus, or Socrates and Ischomachus; in fact, Socrates and some man of straw or good-humored nine-pin set up to be bowled down as a matter of course. How inevitably the reader feels his fingers itching, to take up the cudgels instead of Crito for one ten minutes! Had *we* been favored with an interview, we can answer for it that the philosopher should not have had t all his own way: there should have been a 'scratch' at least between us; and instead of waiting to see Crito punished without delivering one blow that would 'have made a dent in a pound of butter,' posterity should have formed a ring about us, crying out — 'Pull baker, pull devil' — according as the accidents of the struggle went this way or that. If dialogue must be the form, at least it should not have been collusive dialogue. Whereas, with Crito and the rest of the men who were in training for the part of disputants, it was a matter of notoriety — that, if they presumed to put in a sly thrust under the ribs of the philosopher, those about Socrates, *οἱ ἀμφὶ τὸν Σωκράτην*, would kick them into the kennel. It was a permanent 'cross' that was fought throughout life between Socrates and his obsequious antagonists.

As Plato and Xenophon must have hated each other with a theological hatred, it is a clear case that they would not have harmonized in anything if they had supposed it open to evasion. They would have got another atmosphere had it been possible. Diverging from each other in all points beside, beyond doubt they would have diverged as to this form of dialogue, had they not conceived that it was essential to the business of philosophy. It is plain from this one fact, how narrow was the range of conception which the Socratic school applied to the possible modes of deal-

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ing with polemic truth. They represented the case thus: — Truth, they fancied, offered itself by separate units, by moments, (to borrow a word from dynamics,) by what Cicero calls 'apices rerum' and 'punctiunculæ.' Each of these must be separately examined. It was like the *items* in a disputed account. There must be an auditor to check and revise each severally for itself. This process of auditing could only be carried on through a brisk dialogue. The philosopher in monologue was like a champion at a tournament with nobody to face him. He was a chess-player with no opponent. The game could not proceed. But how mean and limited a conception this was, which lay as a basis for the whole Socratic philosophy, becomes apparent to any man who considers any ample body of truth, whether polemic truth or not, in all its proportions. Take Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*, and imagine a Socratic man dealing with that. How does Warburton establish that Moses held such a legation? He lays down a syllogism, the *major* of which asserts a general law with regard to false or unsound religions, — viz. that no such religion could sustain itself, or rear itself, to any height or duration without the aid of a particular doctrine, viz. — the doctrine of a resurrection. This is the *major*; then for his *minor*. Warburton maintains, that the Mosaic religion *did* sustain itself without that doctrine. Whence the conclusion follows formally — that, having accomplished what was hopeless for a merely human invention, the Mosaic dispensation could not have been such a human invention; that it enjoyed a secret support from God; and that Moses was truly what he represented himself — God's ambassador. Consider how

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little the Platonic and Xenophontic mode of philosophizing would apply to this case. You may see fit to deny the entire major proposition of the bishop, and yet you may find it impossible to quarrel with the separate arguments, with each of them or with all of them, on which the major is built. All may be unexceptionable; and yet, when the record is closed, you may see cause to say, — 'Bishop, your materials are good; but they are not strong enough to support the weighty column which you have built upon them.' But this is an objection which cannot be made until you have heard him to the end. You must suspend; whereas the Socratic man never *does* suspend. A man who brings an alphabet of reasons, which are professedly to avail cumulatively in proof of his thesis, will not consider himself answered because you object to P or Q amongst his arguments. 'My proofs are separate and independent,' he replies; 'it is my glory that I can afford to give you a pawn or so, and yet win the game.' Another mode of proceeding against the bishop would be this: — You might concede his major, and utterly deny, as many men *have* denied, his minor. But whether you see cause to go against the upper or lower proposition; against the rule, or against the subsumption under the rule; equally you find that the Socratic mode of process is quite unavailing, or availing only by accident. And even this is not by any means the worst case supposable. Here, by the supposition, you have a long train of arguments, which may be valid as a *cumulus*, notwithstanding that, Socratically, you might find this or that in particular to be a hollow nut. And again, such a train may be supposed, to which, Socratically, you force an assent

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seriatim and *articulatim*; all the *items*, what the Romans called the *nomina* in a creditor's account, are unimpeachable; and yet, as a whole, as the 'tottle of a whole,' you protest against them as insufficient for the *probandum*. They are good; but not good for so much. They are available, and for the length of a mile, suppose; but they do not reach the three miles of the object in question. In the first case, Socrates negatives some of the parts, and yet he cannot negative the result. He is partially victorious, and yet is beaten as to the whole. In the second case, Socrates affirms all the parts, and yet cannot affirm the result. He is universally victorious in the detail, and yet is beaten upon the whole question. Yet, in all this, we repeat — the Socratic weakness is not adequately exposed. There is a far larger and subtler class of cases where the arguments for and against are not susceptible of this separate valuation. One is valid only through and by a second, which second again is involved in a third; and so on. Thus, by way of a brief instance, take all the systems of political economy which have grown up since Turgot and Quesnel. They are all polemic — that is, all have moulded themselves in hostility to some other ideas — all had their birth in opposition. But it would be impossible to proceed Socratically with any one of them. If you should attempt to examine Ricardo sentence by sentence, or even chapter by chapter, his apologist would loudly resist such a process as inapplicable. You must *hold on* — you must keep fast hold of certain principles until you have time to catch hold of certain others — seven or eight, suppose; and then from the whole taken in continuation, but not from any one as an

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insulated principle, you come into a power of adjudicating upon the pretensions of the whole theory. The doctrine of value, for example — could you understand that taken apart? could you value it apart? As a Socratic logician, could you say of it either *affirmatur* or *negatur*, until you see it coming round and revolving in the doctrines of rent, profits, machinery, &c., which are so many functions of value; and which doctrines first react with a weight of verification upon the other?

These, unless parried, are knock-down blows to the Socratic, and therefore to the Platonic philosophy, if treated as a *modus philosophandi*; and if that philosophy is treated as a body of doctrines apart from any *modus* or *ratio docendi*, we should be glad to hear what they are. For we never could find any either in Plato or Xenophon, which are insisted on as essential. Accidental hints and casual suggestions cannot be viewed as doctrines in that sense which is necessary to establish a separate school. And all the German Tiedemanns and Tennemanns, the tedious men and the tenpenny-men, that have written their twelve or their eighteen volumes *viritim* upon Plato, will find it hard to satisfy their readers unless they make head against these little objections; because these objections seem to impeach the very *method* of the 'Socraticæ Chartæ,' and except as the authors or illustrators of a method the Socratici are no school at all.

But are not we travelling a little out of our proper field, in attacking this method? Our business was with this method considered as a *form of style*, not considered as a *form of logic*. True, O rigorous reader. Yet digressions and moderate excursions have a license. Besides which, on strict consideration,

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doubts arise whether we *have* been digressing. For whatsoever acted as a power on Greek prose, through many ages, whatsoever gave it a bias towards any one characteristic excess, becomes important in virtue of its relations to our subject. Now, the form of dialogue so obstinately maintained by the earliest philosophers, who used prose as the vehicle of their teaching, had the unhappy effect of impressing from the earliest era of Attic literature a colloquial taint upon the prose literature of that country. The great authority of Socrates, maintained for ages by all sorts of fables, naturally did much to strengthen this original twist in the prose style. About fifty years after the death of Socrates, the writings of Aristotle were beginning to occupy the attention of Greece; and in them we see as resolute a departure from the dialogue form as in his elders of the same house the adherence to that form had been servile and bigoted. His style, though arid from causes that will hereafter be noticed, was much more dignified, or at least more grave and suitable to philosophic speculation than that of any man before him. Contemporary with the early life of Socrates was a truly great man, Anaxagoras, the friend and reputed preceptor of Pericles. It is probable he may have written in the style of Aristotle. Having great systematic truths to teach, such as solved existing phenomena, and not such as raised fresh phenomena for future solution, he would naturally adopt the form of continuous exposition. Nor do we at this moment remember a case of any very great man who had any real and novel truth to communicate, having adopted the form of dialogue, excepting only the case of Galileo. Plato, indeed, like Galileo, demanded geom-

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etry as a qualification in his students — that is, in those who paid him a διδακτρον or fee for the privilege of personally attending his conversations: but he demanded no such qualification in his readers; or else we can assure him that very few copies of his *Opera Omnia* would have been sold in Athens. This low qualification it was for the readers of Plato, and still more for those of Xenophon, which operated to diffuse the reputation of Socrates. Besides, it was a rare thing in Greece to see two men sounding the trumpet on behalf of a third. And we hope it is not ungenerous to suspect, that each dallied with the same purpose as our Chatterton and Macpherson, viz. to turn round on the public when once committed and compromised by some unequivocal applause, saying, 'Gentlemen of Athens, this idol Socrates is a phantom of my brain: as respects the philosophy ascribed to him, I am Socrates.'

But in what mode does the conversational taint, which we trace to the writings of the Socratici, enforced by the imaginary martyrdom of Socrates, express itself? In what forms of language? By what peculiarities? By what defects of style? We will endeavor to explain. One of the Scaligers (if we remember it was the elder,) speaking of the Greek article ὁ, ἡ, το, called it *loquacissimæ gentis flabellum*. Now, *pace superbissimi viri*, this seems nonsense; because the use of the article is not capricious, but grounded in the very structure and necessities of the Greek language. Garrulous or not, the poor men were obliged by the philosophy of their tongue to use the article in certain situations. And, to say the truth, these situations were very much the same as in English. Allowing for a few cases of

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proper names, participles, or adjectives postponed to their substantives, &c., the two general functions of the article were, — 1, to individualize, as, *e. g.* 'It is not any sword that will do, I will have *the* sword of my father;' and 2, the very opposite function, viz., to generalize in the highest degree — a use which our best English grammars wholly overlook — as *e. g.* 'Let *the* sword give way to *the* gown;' not that particular sword, but every sword, where each is used as a representative symbol of the corresponding professions. '*The* peasant presses on the kibes *of the* courtier,' where the class is indicated by the individual. In speaking again of diseases, and the organs affected, we usually accomplish this generalization by means of the definite article. We say, 'He suffered from *a* headache;' but also we say, 'from *the* headache;' and invariably we say, 'He died of *the* stone,' &c. And though we fancy it a peculiarity of the French language to say, '*Le* cœur lui étoit navré de douleur,' yet we ourselves say, 'The heart was affected in his case.' In all these uses of the definite article, there is little real difference between the Greek language and our own. The main difference is in the negative use — in the meaning implied by the absence of the article, which, with the Greeks, expresses our article *a*, but with us is a form of generalization. In all this there was nothing left free to the choice. And Scaliger had no right to find any illustration of Greek levity in what was unavoidable.

But what *we* tax as undignified in the Greek prose style, as a badge of garrulity, as a taint from which the Greek prose never cleansed itself, are all those forms of lively colloquialism, with the fretfulness, and

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hurry, and demonstrative energy of people unduly excited by bodily presence and by ocular appeals to their sensibility. Such a style is picturesque no doubt; so is the Scottish dialect of low life as first employed in novels by Sir Walter Scott: that dialect greatly assisted the characteristic expression: it furnished the benefit of a Dorie dialect; but what man in his senses would employ it in a grave work, and speaking in his own person? Now, the colloquial expletives, so profusely employed by Plato, his ἀρα, his γε, &c., the forms of his sentences, the forms of his transitions, and other intense peculiarities of the chattering man, as opposed to the meditating man, have crept over the face of Greek literature; and though some people think every thing holy which is printed in Greek characters, we must be allowed to rank these forms of expression as mere vulgarities. Sometimes, in Westmoreland, if you chance to meet an ancient father of his valley, one who is thoroughly vernacular in his talk, being unsinged by the modern furnace of revolution, you may have a fancy for asking him how far it is to the next town. In which case, you will receive for answer pretty nearly the following words: — 'Why like, it's gaily nigh like, to four mile like.' Now, if the pruriency of your curiosity should carry you to torment and vex this aged man, by pressing a special investigation into this word *like*, the only result is likely to be that you will kill *him*, and do yourself no good. Call it an expletive, indeed! a filling up! Why, to him it is the only indispensable part of the sentence; the sole fixture. It is the balustrade which enables him to descend the stairs of conversation, without falling overboard; and if the word were proscribed by Parliament,

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he would have no resource but in everlasting silence. Now, the expletives of Plato are as gross, and must have been, to the Athenian, as unintelligible as those of the Westmoreland peasant. It is true the value, the effect to the feelings, was secured by daily use, and by the position in the sentence. But so it is to the English peasant. *Like* in his use is a modifying, a restraining particle, which forbids you to understand anything in a dangerous, unconditional sense. But then, again, the Greek particle of transition, that eternal δε, and the introductory formula of μεν and δε, however earnestly people may fight for them, because in fact Greek, is now past mending. The δε is strictly equivalent to the *whereby* of a sailor: 'whereby I went to London; whereby I was robbed; whereby I found the man that robbed me.' All relations, all modes of succession or transition are indicated by one and the same particle. This could arise, even as a license, only in the laxity of conversation. But the most offensive indication of the conversational spirit, as *presiding* in Greek prose, is to be found in the morbid energy of oaths scattered over the face of every prose composition which aims at rhetorical effect. The literature is deformed with a constant roulade of 'by Jove,' 'by Minerva,' &c., as much as the conversation of high-bred Englishmen in the reign of Charles II. In both cases, this habit belonged to a state of transition; and if the prose literature of Greece had been cultivated by a succession of authors as extended as that of England, it would certainly have outworn this badge of spurious energy. That it did not, is a proof that the Greek literature did not reach the consummation of art.

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PART III.

Reader, you are beginning to suspect us. 'How long do we purpose to detain people?' For anything that appears, we may be designing to write on to the twentieth century; for twice thirty years. 'And *whither* are we going?' Towards what object? which is as urgent a quære as *how far*. Perhaps we may be leading you into treason; or (which indeed is pretty much the same thing) we may be paving the way to 'Repeal.' You feel symptoms of doubt and restiveness; and, like Hamlet with his father's ghost, you will follow us no further unless we explain what it is that we are in quest of.

Our course, then, for the rest of our progress, the outline of our method, will pursue the following objects. We shall detain you a little longer on the Grecian prose literature; and we shall pursue that literature within the gates of Latium. What was the Grecian idea of *style*, what the Roman, will appear as a deduction from this review. With respect to the Greeks, we shall endeavor to show that they had not arrived at a full expanded consciousness of the separate idea expressed by *style;* and, in order to account for this failure, we shall point out the deflexion — the bias — which was impressed upon the Greek speculations in this particular, by the tendency of their civil life. *That* was made important in the eyes of the speculative critic, which was indispensable for the actual practitioner; *that* was indispensable for the actual practitioner, which was exacted by the course of public ambition. The political aspirant, who needed a command of fluent eloquence, sought for so much

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knowledge (and no more) as promised to be available in his own particular mode of competition. The speculative critic, or professional master of rhetoric, offered just so much information (and no more) as was likely to be sought by his clients. Each alike cultivated no more than experience showed him would be demanded. But in Rome, and for a reason, perhaps, which will appear worth pausing upon, a subtler conception of style was formed; though still far from being perfectly developed. The Romans, whether worse orators or not than the Grecians, were certainly better rhetoricians. And Cicero, the mighty master of language for the Pagan world, whom we shall summon as our witness, will satisfy us that, in this research at least, the Roman intellect was more searching, and pressed neared to the undiscovered truth than the Grecian.

From a particular passage in the *De Oratore*, which will be cited for the general purpose here indicated of proving a closer approximation on the part of Roman thinkers, than had previously been made to the very heart of this difficult subject, we shall take occasion to make a still nearer approach for ourselves. We shall endeavor to bring up our reader to the fence, and persuade him if possible, to take the leap which still remains to be taken in this field of Style. But as we have reason to fear that he will 'refuse' it, we shall wheel him round and bring him up to it from another quarter. A gentle touch of the spur may then, perhaps, carry him over. Let not the reader take it to heart — that we here represent him under the figure of a horse, and ourselves, in a nobler character, as riding him, and that we even take the liberty of proposing to spur him. Anything may be borne in metaphor.

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Figuratively, one may kick a man without offence There are no limits of allegoric patience. But no matter, who takes the leap, or how, a leap there is, which must be taken in the course of these speculations on Style, before the ground will be open for absolute advance. Every man who has studied and meditated the difficulties of style, must have had a sub-conscious sense of a bar in his way, at a particular point of the road, thwarting his free movement: he could not have evaded such a sense but by benefit of extreme shallowness. That bar, which we shall indicate must be cleared away, thrown down, or surmounted. And then the prospect will lie open to a new map, and a perfect map, of the whole region. It will then become possible for the first time to overlook the whole geography of the adjacencies. An entire theory of the difficulties being before the student, it will, at length, be possible to aid his efforts by ample *practical* suggestions. Of these we shall ourselves offer the very plainest, viz. those which apply to the mechanology of style. For these there will be an easy opening: they will not go beyond the reasonable limits disposable for a single subject in a literary journal. As to the rest, which would (Germanly speaking) require a 'strong' octavo for their full exposition, we shall hold ourselves to have done enough in fulfilling the large promise we have made — the promise of marking out for subsequent cultivation and development all the possible subdivisions and sections amongst the resources of the rhetorician; all the powers which he can employ, and therefore all the difficulties which he needs to study; the arts by which he can profit, and in correspondence with them, the obstacles by

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which he will be resisted. Were this done, we should no longer see those incoherent sketches which are now circulating in the world upon questions of taste, of science, of practical address, as applied to the management of style and rhetoric: the public ear would no longer be occupied by feeble Frenchmen — Rollin, Rapin, Batteux, Bonhours, Du Bos, and *id genus omne;* nor by the elegant but desultory Blair; nor by scores of others who bring an occasional acuteness or casual information to this or that subsection of their duty, whilst (taken as general guides) they are universally insufficient: — No; but the business of rhetoric, the management of our mother-tongue in all offices to which it can be applied, would become as much a matter of systematic art, as regular a subject for training and mechanic discipline, as the science of discrete quantity in Arithmetic, or of continuous quantity in Geometry. But will not *that* be likely to impress a character of mechanic monotony upon style, like the miserable attempts at reforming handwriting? Look at them; touch them; or, if you are afraid of soiling your fingers, hold them up with the tongs; they reduce all characteristic varieties of writing to one form of blank identity, and *that* the very vilest form of scribbling which exists in Europe, viz. to the wooden scratch (as if traced with a skewer) universally prevailing amongst French people. Vainly would Aldorisius apply his famous art, (viz. the art of deciphering a man's character from handwriting,) to the villanous scrawls which issue from this modern laboratory of pseudo-calligraphy. All pupils under *these* systems write alike: the predestined thief is confounded with the patriot or martyr; the innocent

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young girl with the old hag that watches country wagons for victims. In the same indistinguishable character, so far as this reforming process is concerned, would Joseph Hume sign a motion for retrenching three half-crowns per annum from the orphan daughter of a man who had died in battle; and Queen Adelaide write a subscription towards a fresh church for carrying on war, from generation to generation, upon sin and misery.

Now, if a mechanic system of training for Style would have the same levelling effects as these false calligraphies, better by far that we should retain our old ignorance. If art is to terminate in a killing monotony, welcome the old condition of inartificial simplicity! — So say you, reader: aye, but so say we. This does not touch *us*: — The mechanism *we* speak of will apply to no meritorious qualities of style, but to its faults, and, above all, to its awkwardnesses; in fact, to all that now constitutes the *friction* of style; the needless joltings and retardations of our fluent motion. As to the motion itself, in all that is positive, in its derivation, in its exciting impulses, in its speed, and its characteristic varieties, it will remain unaffected. The modes of human feeling are inexhaustible; the forms by which feeling connects itself with thought are indefeasibly natural; the channels through which both impress themselves upon language are infinite. All these are imperturbable by human art: they are past the reach of mechanism: you might as well be afraid that some steam-engine — Atlas, suppose, or Samson, (whom the Germans call Simpson,) — should perfidiously hook himself to the earth's axis, and run away with us to Jupiter. Let Simpson do his worst, we defy

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him. And so of style: in that sense, under which we all have an interest in its free movements, it will for ever remain free. It will defy art to control it. In that sense, under which it ever *can* be mechanized, we have all an interest in wishing that it should be so. Our final object therefore is a meritorious one, with no intermixture of evil. This being explained, and our course onwards having been mapped out, let us now proceed with our work, first recapitulating in direct juxtaposition with each other the points of our future movement: —

1. Greek and Latin literature we shall examine only for the sake of appraising or deducing the sort of ideas which they had upon the subject of style. It will appear that these ideas were insufficient. At the best they were tentative. 2. From them, however, may be derived a hint, a dim suggestion, of the true question in arrear; and, universally, that goes a great way towards the true answer. '*Dimidium facti*,' says the Roman proverb, '*qui benè cœpit, habit.*' To have made a good beginning is one-half of the work. *Prudens interrogatio*, says a wise modern; to have shaped your question skilfully, is, in that sense, and with a view to the answer, a good beginning. 3. Having laid this foundation towards an answer, we shall then attempt the answer itself. 4. After which, that is, after removing to the best of our power such difficulties to the *higher understanding* as beset the subject of style, rhetoric, composition, having (if we do not greatly delude ourselves) removed the one great bar to a right theory of style, or a practical discipline of style, we shall leave to some future work of more suitable dimensions the filling up of our outline. Our-

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selves we shall confine to such instant suggestions — practical, popular, broadly intelligible, as require no extensive preparation to introduce them on the author's part; no serious effort to understand them on the reader's. Whatever is more than this, will better suit with the variable and elastic proportions of a separate book, than with the more rigid proportions of a miscellaneous journal.

Coming back, then, for hasty purposes, to Greek literature, we wish to direct the reader's eye upon a remarkable phenomenon in the history of that literature, and subsequently of all human genius; not *so* remarkable, but that multitudes must have noticed it, and yet remarkable enough to task a man's ingenuity in accounting for it. The earliest known occasion, on which this phenomenon drew a direct and strong gaze upon itself, was in a little historical sketch composed by a Roman officer during the very opening era of Christianity. We speak of the *Historia Romana*, written and published about the very year of the Crucifixion by Velleius Paterculus in the court of Tiberius Cæsar, the introduction to which presents us with a very interesting outline of general history. The style is sometimes clumsy and unwieldy, but nervous, masculine, and such as became a soldier. In higher qualities, in thoughtfulness, and the spirit of finer observation, it is far beyond the standard of a mere soldier; and it shows, in common with many other indications lying on the face of Roman society at that era, how profoundly the great struggles that had recently convulsed the world must have terminated in that effect which followed in the wake of the French Revolution; viz. in a vast stimulation to the meditative faculties

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of man. The agitation, the frenzy, the sorrow of the times, reacted upon the human intellect, and forced men into meditation. Their own nature was held up before them in a sterner form. They were compelled to contemplate an ideal of man, far more colossal than is brought forward in the tranquil aspects of society; and they were often engaged, whether they would or not, with the elementary problems of social philosophy. Mere danger forced a man into thoughts which else were foreign to his habits. Mere necessity of action forced him to decide. Such changes went along with the Reformation; such changes went along with the French Revolution; such changes went along with the great recasting of Roman society under the two earliest Cæsars. In every page of Paterculus we read the swell and agitation of waters subsiding from a deluge. Though a small book, it is tumid with revolutionary life. And something also is due, no doubt, to the example of the mighty leader in the Roman Revolution, to the intellectual and literary tastes diffused by him —

'The foremost man of all this world,'

who had first shown the possibility of uniting the military leader's truncheon with the most brilliant *stylus* of the rhetorician. How wonderful and pleasing to find such accomplishments of accurate knowledge, comprehensive reading, and study, combined with so searching an intellect, in a man situated as Paterculus, reared amongst camps, amidst the hurry of forced marches, and under the privations of solitary outposts. The old race of hirsute centurions — how changed! — how perfectly regenerated by the influence of three Cæsars in succession applying a paternal encouragement to literature.

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Admiring this man so much, we have paused to review the position in which he stood. Now, recurring to that remark, (amongst so many original remarks,) by which, in particular, he connects himself with our subject, we may venture to say — that, if it was a very just remark for *his* experience, it is far more so for ours. What he remarked, what he founded upon a review of two nations and two literatures — we may now countersign by an experience of eight or nine. His remark was — upon the tendency of intellectual power to gather in clusters; its unaccountable propensity (he thought it such) to form into separate insulated groups. This tendency he illustrates first in two cases of Grecian literature. Perhaps that might have been an insufficient basis for a general theory. But it occurred to Paterculus in confirmation of his doctrine, that the very same tendency had reappeared in his native literature. The same phenomenon had manifested itself, and, more than once, in the history of Roman intellect; the same strong *nisus* of great wits to gather and crystallize about a common nucleus. That marked gregariousness in human genius had taken place amongst the poets and orators of Rome, which had previously taken place amongst the poets, orators, and artists of Greece. What importance was attached by Paterculus to this interesting remark, what stress he laid upon its appreciation by the reader, is evident from the emphatic manner in which he introduces it, as well as from the conscious disturbance of the symmetry which he incurs rather than suppress it. These are his words: — 'Notwithstanding that this section of my work has considerably outrun the proportions of that model which I had laid

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down for my guidance, and although perfectly aware that, in circumstances of hurry so unrelenting, which like a revolving wheel or the eddy of rapid waters, allows me no respite or pause, I am summoned rather to omit what is necessary than to court what is redundant; still, I cannot prevail on myself to forbear from uttering and giving a pointed expression to a thought which I have often revolved in my mind, but to this hour have not been able satisfactorily to account for in theory: (*nequeo tamen temperare mihi quin rem sæpe agitatam animo meo, neque ad liquidum ratione perductam, signem stylo.*') Having thus bespoke the reader's special attention, the writer goes on to ask if any man can sufficiently wonder on observing that eminent genius, in almost every mode of its development, (*eminentissima cujusque professionis ingenia,*) had gathered itself into the same narrow ring-fence of a single generation. Intellects that in each several department of genius were capable of distinguished execution, (*cujusque clari operis capacia ingenia,*) had sequestrated themselves from the great stream and succession of their fellow-men into a close insulated community of time, and into a corresponding stage of proficiency measured on their several scales of merit,[4] (*in similitudinem et temporum et profectuum semetipsa ab aliis separaverunt.*) Without giving *all* the exemplifications by which Paterculus has supported this thesis, we shall cite two: *Una* (*neque multorum annorum spatio divisa*) *ætas per divini spiritûs viros, Æschylum, Sophoclem, Euripidem, illustravit Tragœdiam.* Not that this trinity of poets was *so* contemporary as brothers are; but they were contemporary as youthful uncles in relation to elderly nephews:

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Æschylus was viewed as a senior by Sophocles, Sophocles by Euripides; but all might by possibility have met together (what a constellation!) at the same table. Again, says Paterculus, *Quid ante Isocratem, quid post ejus auditores, clarum in oratoribus fuit?* Nothing of any distinction in oratory *before* Isocrates, nothing *after* his personal audience. So confined was that orbit within which the perfection of Greek tragedy within which the perfection of Greek eloquence revolved. The same law, the same strong tendency, he insists, is illustrated in the different schools of Greek comedy; and again of Greek philosophy. Nay, it is more extensively illustrated amongst Greek artists in general: '*Hoc idem evenisse grammaticis, plastis, pictoribus, scalptoribus, quisquis temporum institerit notis — reperiet.*'

From Greece Paterculus translates the question to his own country in the following pointed manner: summing up the whole doctrine, and re-affirming it in a form almost startling and questionable by its rigor — '*Adeo artatum angustiis temporum,*' so punctually concentrated was all merit within the closest limits of time, '*ut nemo memoriâ dignus, alter ab altero videri nequiverint:*' no man of any consideration but he might have had ocular cognizance of all others in his own field who attained to distinction. He adds — '*Neque hoc in Græcis quam in Romanis evenit magis.*'

His illustrations from the Roman literature we do not mean to follow: one only, as requisite for our purpose, we cite: — '*Oratio, ac vis forensis, perfectumque prosæ eloquentiæ decus* (*pace P. Crassi et Gracchorum dixerim*) *ita universa sub principe operis sui erupit Tullio, ut mirari neminem possis nisi aut*

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ab illo visum, aut qui illum viderit.' This is said with epigrammatic point; the perfection of prose, and the brilliancy of style as an artificial accomplishment, was so identified with Cicero's generation, that no distinguished artist, none whom you could greatly admire, but might be called his contemporary; none so much his senior, but Cicero might have seen *him* — none so much his junior, but *he* might have seen Cicero. It is true that Crassus, in Cicero's infancy, and the two Gracchi, in the infancy of Crassus, (neither of whom, therefore, could have been seen by Cicero,) were memorably potent as orators; in fact, for tragical results to themselves, (which, by the way, was the universal destiny of great *Roman* orators;) and nobody was more sensible of their majestic pretensions, merely as orators, than Cicero himself, who has, accordingly, made Crassus and Antony predominant speakers in his splendid dialogues *De Oratore*. But they were merely demoniac powers, not artists. And with respect to these early orators, (as also with respect to some others, whose names we have omitted,) Paterculus has made a special reservation. So that he had not at all overlooked the claims of these great men; but he did not feel that any real exception to his general law was created by orators, who were indeed wild organs of party rage or popular frenzy, but who wilfully disdained to connect themselves with the refinements of literature. Such orators did not regard themselves as intellectual, but as political, powers. Confining himself to oratory, and to the perfection of prose composition, written or spoken, in the sense of great literary accomplishments, beginning in natural power but perfected by art, Paterculus stands to his

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assertion — that this mode of human genius had so crowded its development within the brief circuit of Cicero's life, (threescore years and three,) as that the total series of Roman orators formed a sort of circle, centring in that supreme orator's person, such as, in modern times, we might call an electrical circle; each link of the chain having been either electrified by Cicero, or having electrified *him*. Seneca, with great modesty, repeats the very same assertion in other words: '*Quicquid Romana facundia habuit, quod insolenti Græciæ aut opponat aut præferat, circa Ciceronem efloruit.*' A most ingenuous and self-forgetting homage in him; for a nobler master of thinking than himself, Paganism has not to show, nor — when the cant of criticism has done its worst — a more brilliant master of composition. And were his rule construed literally, it would exclude the two Plinys, the two Senecas, Tacitus, Quinctilian, and others, from the matricula of Roman eloquence. Not one of these men could have seen Cicero; all were divided by more than one generation; and yet, most unquestionably, though all were too reasonable to have fancied themselves any match for the almighty orator in public speaking, yet not one but was an equally accomplished artist in written composition, and under a law of artificial style far more difficult to manage.

However, with the proper allowances for too unmodified a form of expression, we must allow that the singular phenomenon first noticed by Paterculus, as connecting itself with the manifestations of human genius, is sufficiently established by so much of human history as even he had witnessed. For, if it should be alleged that political changes accounted for the

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extinction of oral eloquence, concurrently with the death of Cicero, still there are cases more than enough, even in the poetry of both Greece and Rome, to say nothing of the arts, which bear out the general fact of human genius coming forward by insulated groups and clusters; or, if Pagan ages had left that point doubtful, we have since witnessed Christian repetitions of the truth on the very widest scale. The Italian age of Leo X. in the fifteenth century, the French age of Louis XIV. in the seventeenth century, the German age, commencing with Kant, Wieland, Goethe, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries — all illustrate the tendency to these intermitting paroxysms of intellectual energy. The lightning and the storm seem to have made the circuit of the whole European heavens, to have formed vortices successively in every civilized land, and to have discharged themselves, by turns, from every quarter of the atmosphere. In our own country there have been three such gatherings of intellectual power: — 1st, the age of Shakspeare, Spenser, and the great school of dramatists that were already dying out in the latter days of Ben Jonson, (1636,) and were finally extinguished by the great civil commotions beginning in 1642; 2dly, the age of Queen Anne and George I.; 3dly, the age commencing with Cowper, partially roused, perhaps, by the American war, and afterwards so powerfully stimulated (as was the corresponding era of Kant and Wieland) by the French Revolution. This last volcanic eruption of the British genius has displayed enormous power and splendor. Let malice and the base detraction of contemporary jealousy say what it will, greater originality of genius, more expansive

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variety of talent, never was exhibited than in our own country since the year 1793. Every mode of excellence, except only dramatic excellence, (in which we have nothing modern to place by the side of Schiller's *Wallenstein*,) has been revealed in dazzling lustre. And he that denies it — may he be suffocated by his own bilious envy!

But the point upon which we wish to fix the reader's attention, in citing this interesting observation of the Roman officer, and the reason for which we have cited it at all, is not so much for the mere fact of these spring-tides occurring in the manifestations of human genius, intermitting pulses (so to speak) in human energies, as the psychological peculiarity which seems to affect the cycle of their recurrences. Paterculus occupies himself chiefly with the *causes* of such phenomena; and one main cause he suggests as lying in the emulation which possesses men when once a specific direction has been impressed upon the public competitions. This, no doubt, is one of the causes. But a more powerful cause, perhaps, lies in a principle of union than in any principle of division amongst men — viz. in the principle of sympathy. The great Italian painters, for instance, were doubtless evoked in such crowds by the action of this principle. To hear the buzz of idolizing admiration settling for years upon particular works of art and artists, kindles something better than merely the ambition and rivalship of men; it kindles feelings happier and more favorable to excellence — viz. genial love and comprehension of the qualities fitted to stir so profound and lasting an emotion. This contagion of sympathy runs electrically through society, searches high and low for congenial

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powers, and suffers none to lurk unknown to the possessor. A vortex is created which draws into its suction whatever is liable to a similar action. But, not to linger upon this question of causes, what we wish to place under the reader's eye is rather the peculiar type which belongs to these revolutions of national intellect, according to the place which each occupies in the order of succession. Possibly it would seem an over-refinement if we were to suggest that the odd terms in the series indicate creative energies, and the even terms reflective energies; and we are far enough from affecting the honors of any puerile hypothesis. But, in a general way, it seems plausible and reasonable, that there will be alternating successions of power in the first place, and next of reaction upon that power from the reflective faculties. It does seem natural, that first of all should blossom the energies of creative power; and, in the next era of the literature, when the consciousness has been brightened to its own agencies, will be likely to come forward the re-agencies of the national mind on what it has created. The period of meditation will succeed to the period of production. Or, if the energies of creation are again partially awake, finding themselves forestalled, as regards the grander passions, they will be likely to settle upon the feebler elements of manners. Social differences will now fix the attention by way of substitute for the bolder differences of nature. Should a third period, after the swing of the pendulum through an arch of centuries, succeed for the manifestation of the national genius, it is possible that the long interval, since the inaugural era of creative art, will have so changed all the elements of society, and the aspects

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of life, as to restore the mind to much of its infant freedom; it may no longer feel the captivity of an imitative spirit in dealing with the very same class of creations as exercised its earliest powers. The original national genius may now come forward in perfectly new forms, without the sense of oppression from inimitable models. The hoar of ages may have withdrawn some of these models from active competition. And thus it may not be impossible that oscillations between the creative and reflective energies of the mind might go on through a cycle of many ages.

In our own literature we see this scheme of oscillations illustrated. In the Shakspeare period we see the fulness of life and the enormity of power throwing up a tropical exuberance of vegetation. A century afterwards we see a generation of men, lavishly endowed with genius, but partly degraded by the injurious training of a most profligate era growing out of great revolutionary convulsions, and partly lowered in the tone of their aspirations by a despair of rivalling the great creations of their predecessors. We see them universally acquiescing in humbler modes of ambition; showing sometimes a corresponding merit to that of their greatest forefathers, but merit (if sometimes equal) yet equal upon a lower scale. Thirdly. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, we see a new birth of original genius, of which it is not lawful to affirm any absolute inferiority, even by comparison with the Shakspearian age of Titans. For whatsoever is strictly and thoroughly original, being *sui generis*, cannot be better or worse than any other model of excellence which is also original. One animal structure, compared with another of a different class, is equally good

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and perfect. One valley, which is no copy of another, but has a separate and peculiar beauty, cannot be compared for any purpose of disadvantage with another. One poem, which is composed upon a law of its own, and has a characteristic or separate beauty of its own, cannot be inferior to any other poem whatsoever. The class, the order, may be inferior; the scale may be a lower one; but the individual work, the degree of merit marked upon the scale, must be equal — if only the poem is equally original. In all such cases, understand, ye miserable snarlers, at contemporary merit, that the puerile *goût de comparaison* (as La Bruyere calls it) is out of place; universally you cannot affirm any *imparity*, where the ground is preoccupied by *disparity*. Where there is no parity of principle, there is no basis for comparison.

Now, passing with the benefit of these explanations, to Grecian literature, we may observe that there were in that field of human intellect no more than two developments of power from first to last. And, perhaps, the unlearned reader (for it is to the praise and honor of a powerful journal, that it has the unlearned equally with the learned amongst its readers) will thank us for here giving him, in a very few words, such an account of the Grecian literature in its periods of manifestation, and in the relations existing between these periods — that he shall not easily forget them.

There were, in illustration of the Roman aide-de-camp's [5] doctrine, two groups or clusters of Grecian wits; two depositions or stratifications of the national genius; and these were about a century apart. What makes them specially rememberable is — the fact that each of these brilliant clusters had gathered separately

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about that man as central pivot, who, even apart from this relation to the literature, was otherwise the leading spirit of his age. It is important for our purpose — it will be interesting, even without that purpose, for the reader — to notice the distinguishing character, or marks, by which the two clusters are separately recognized; the marks, both personal and chronological. As to the personal distinctions, we have said — that in each case severally the two men, who offered the nucleus to the gathering, happened to be otherwise the most eminent and splendid men of the period. Who were they? The one was PERICLES, the other was ALEXANDER OF MACEDON. Except Themistocles, who may be ranked as senior to Pericles by just one generation, (or thirty-three years,[6]) in the whole deduction of Grecian annals no other public man, statesman, captain-general, administrator of the national resources, can be mentioned as approaching to these two men in splendor of reputation, or even in real merit. Pisistratus was too far back: Alcibiades, who might (chronologically speaking) have been the son of Pericles, was too unsteady, and (according to Mr. Coleridge's coinage) 'unreliable;' or, perhaps, in more correct English, too '*unrelyuponable*.'

Thus far our purpose prospers. No man can pretend to forget two such centres as Pericles for the elder group, or Alexander of Macedon, (the 'strong he-goat' of Jewish prophecy,) for the junior. Round these two *foci*, in two different but adjacent centuries gathered the total starry heavens — the galaxy, the Pantheon of Grecian intellect. All that Greece produced — of awful solemnity in her tragic stage, of riotous mirth and fancy in her comic stage, of power in her elo-

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quence, of wisdom in her philosophy; all that has since tingled in the ears of twenty-four centuries, of her prosperity in the arts, her sculpture, her architecture, her painting, her music — everything, in short, excepting only her higher mathematics, which waited for a further development — which required the incubation of the musing intellect for yet another century — revolved like two neighboring planetary systems about these two solar orbs. Two mighty vortices, Pericles and Alexander the Great, drew into strong eddies about themselves all the glory and the pomp of Greek literature, Greek eloquence, Greek wisdom, Greek art. Next, that we may still more severely search the relations in all points between the two systems, let us assign the chronological *locus* of each: because that will furnish another element towards the exact distribution of the chart representing the motion and the oscillations of human genius. Pericles had a very long administration. He was Prime Minister of Athens for upwards of one entire generation. He died in the year 429 before Christ, and in a very early stage of that great Peloponnesian war, which was the one sole intestine war for Greece affecting *every* nook and angle in the land. Now, in this long public life of Pericles, we are at liberty to fix on *any* year as his chronological *locus*. On good reasons, not called for in this place, we fix on the year 444. This is too remarkable to be forgotten. *Four*, *four*, *four*, what at some games of cards is called a '*prial*,' (we presume, by an elision of the first vowel *a*, for *parial*,) forms an era which no man can forget. It was the fifteenth year before the death of Pericles, and not far from the bisecting year of his political life. Now, passing to

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the other system, the *locus* of Alexander is quite as remarkable, as little liable to be forgotten when once indicated, and more easily determined, because selected from a narrower range of choice. The exact chronological *locus* of Alexander the Great is 333 years before Christ. Everybody knows how brief was the career of this great man: it terminated in the year 320 before Christ. But the *annus mirabilis* of his public life, the most effective and productive year throughout his oriental anabasis, was the year 333 before Christ. Here we have another '*prial*,' a prial of threes, for the *locus* of Alexander.

Thus far the elements are settled, the chronological longitude and latitude of the two great planetary systems into which the Greek literature breaks up and distributes itself: 444 and 333 are the two central years for the two systems: allowing, therefore, an interspace of 111 years between the *foci* of each. It is thought by some people, that all those stars which you see glittering so restlessly on a keen frosty night in a high latitude, and which seem to have been sown broadcast with as much carelessness as grain lies on a threshing-floor — here showing vast zaarahs of desert blue sky; there again lying close and to some eyes presenting

'The beauteous semblance of a flock at rest,'

are in fact all gathered into zones or *strata*; that our own wicked little earth, (with the whole of our peculiar solar system,) is a part of such a zone; and that all this perfect geometry of the heavens, these radii in the mighty wheel, would become apparent, if we, the spectators, could but survey it from the true centre; which centre may be far too distant for any vision of

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man, naked or armed, to reach. However that may be, it is most instructive to see how many apparent scenes of confusion break up into orderly arrangement, when you are able to supply an *à priori* principle of organization to their seeming chaos. The two vortices of the Greek literature are now separated; the chronological *loci* of their centres are settled. And next, we request the reader thoughtfully to consider who *they* are of whom the elder system is composed.

In the centre, as we have already explained, is Pericles — the great practical statesman; and that orator of whom (amongst so many that vibrated thunderbolts) it was said peculiarly that he thundered and lightened as if he held this Jovian attribute by some individual title. We spare you Milton's magnificent description from the *Paradise Regained* of such an orator 'wielding at will that fierce democracy,' partly because the closing line in its reference 'to *Macedon* and Artaxerxes' throne,' too much points the homage to Demosthenes; but still more, because by too trivial a repetition of splendid passages, a serious injury is done to great poets. Passages of great musical effect, metrical bravuras are absolutely vulgarized by too perpetual a parroting — and the care of Augustus Cæsar *ne nomen suum obsolefieret*,[7] that the majesty of his name should not be vulgarized by bad poets, is more seriously needed in our days on behalf of great poets, to protect them from trivial or too parrot-like a citation.

Passing onwards from Pericles, you find that all the rest in *his* system were men in the highest sense creative; absolutely setting the very first examples, each in his peculiar walk of composition; themselves without previous models, and yet destined every man of

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them to become models for all after-generations; themselves without fathers or mothers, and yet having all posterity for their children. First come the three men *divini spiritûs*, under a heavenly afflatus, Æschylus — Sophocles — Euripides, the creators of Tragedy out of a village mummery. Next comes Aristophanes, who breathed the breath of life into Comedy. Then comes the great philosopher Anaxagoras, who first theorized successfully upon man and the world. Next come, whether great or not, the still more famous philosophers — Socrates, Plato, Xenophon. Then comes, leaning upon Pericles, as sometimes Pericles leaned upon *him*, the divine artist, Phidias;[8] and behind this immortal man walk Herodotus and Thucydides. What a procession to Eleusis would these men have formed; what a frieze, if some great artist could arrange it as dramatically as Chaucer has arranged the *Pilgrimage to Canterbury*.

It will be granted that this is unmasking a pretty strong battery of great guns for the Athens of Pericles. Now, let us step on a hundred years forward. We are now within hail of Alexander; and a brilliant consistory of Grecian men, *that* is, by which he is surrounded. There are now exquisite masters of the more refined Comedy; there are, again, great philosophers, for all the great schools are represented by able successors; and above all others, there is the one philosopher who played with men's minds (according to Lord Bacon's comparison) as freely as ever his princely pupil with their persons — there is Aristotle. There are great orators, and, above all others, there is that orator whom succeeding generations (wisely or not) have adopted as the representative name for what is

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conceivable in oratorial perfection — there is Demosthenes. Aristotle and Demosthenes are in themselves bulwarks of power; many hosts lie in those two names. For artists, again, to range against Phidias, there is Lysippus the sculptor, and there is Apelles the painter. For great captains and masters of strategic art, there is Alexander himself, with a glittering *cortège* of general officers, well qualified to wear the crowns which they will win, and to head the dynasties which they will found. Historians there are now, as in that former age. And, upon the whole, it cannot be denied that the 'turn-out' is showy and imposing.

Before coming to that point, that is, before comparing the second 'deposit' (geologically speaking) of Grecian genius with the first, let us consider what it was (if anything) that connected them. Here, reader, we would wish to put a question. Saving your presence, Did you ever see what is called a dumb-bell? We have; and know it by more painful evidence than that of sight.

You, therefore, oh reader! if personally cognisant of dumb-bells, we shall remind — if not, we shall inform — that it is a cylindrical bar of iron, issuing at each end in a globe of the same metal, and usually it is sheathed in green baize; but, perfidiously so, if that covering is meant to deny or to conceal the fact of those heart-rending thumps which it inflicts upon one's too confiding fingers every third *ictus*. By the way, we have a vague remembrance that the late Mr. Thurtell — the same who was generally censured for murdering the late Mr. Weare — once in a dark lobby attempted to murder a friend by means of a dumb-bell; in which he showed his judgment — we mean in his

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choice of tools; for otherwise, in attempting to murder his friend, he was to blame. Now, reader, it is under this image of the dumb-bell we couch an allegory. Those globes at each end, are the two systems or separate clusters of Greek literature; and that cylinder which connects them, is the long man that ran into each system — binding the two together. Who was that? It was Isocrates. *Great* we cannot call him in conscience; and, therefore, by way of compromise, we call him *long*, which, in one sense, he certainly was; for he lived through four-and-twenty Olympiads, each containing four solar years. He narrowly escaped being a hundred years old; and though that did not carry him from centre to centre, yet, as each system might be supposed to portend a radius each way of twenty years, he had, in fact, a full personal cognisance (and pretty equally) of the two systems, remote as they were, which composed the total world of Grecian genius. Two circumstances have made this man interesting to all posterity; so that people, the most remote and different in character, (Cicero, for instance, and Milton,) have taken a delight in his memory. One is, that the school of rhetoric in Athens, which did not finally go down till the reign of Justinian, and, therefore, lasted above nine hundred and forty years without interruption, began with *him*. He was, says Cicero *De Orat.*, 'Pater eloquentiæ;' and elsewhere he calls him 'Communis magister oratorum.' True, he never practised himself, for which he had two reasons — 'my lungs,' he tells us himself, 'are weak;' and secondly, 'I am naturally, as well as upon principle, a coward,' There he was right. A man would never have seen twenty-four Olympiads who had gone about brawling

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and giving 'jaw,' as Demosthenes and Cicero did. You see what *they* made of it. The other feature of interest in this long man is precisely that fact, viz. that he *was* long. Everybody looks with kindness upon the snowy-headed man who saw the young prince Alexander of Macedon within four years of his starting for Persia; and personally knew most of those that gave lustre to the levees of Pericles. Accordingly, it is for this quality of length that Milton honors him with a touching memorial; for Isocrates was 'that old man eloquent' of Milton's sonnet, whom the battle of Chæronea, 'fatal to liberty, killed with report.' This battle, by which Philip overthrew the last struggles of dying independence in Greece, occurred in the year 338 before Christ. Philip was himself assassinated two years later. Consequently, had Isocrates pulled out, like Caoutchouc, a little longer, he might have seen the silver shields, or Macedonian life-guards, embarking for Persia. In less than five years from that same battle, 'fatal to liberty,' Alexander was taking fatal liberties with Persia, and tickling the catastrophe of Darius. There were just seventy good years between the two expeditions — the Persian anabasis of Cyrus the younger, and the Persian anabasis of Alexander; but Isocrates knew personally many officers and *savans*[9] in both.

Others, beside Cicero and Milton, have taken a deep interest in Isocrates; and, for the very circumstance we have been noticing, his *length*, combined with the accident of position which made that length effective in connecting the twofold literature of Greece. Had he been '*long*' in any other situation than just in that dreary desert between the oasis of Pericles and the

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oasis of Alexander, what good would that have done us? 'A wounded snake' or an Alexandrine verse would have been as useful. But he, feeling himself wanted, laid his length down like a railroad, exactly where he could be useful — with his positive pole towards Pericles, and his negative pole towards Alexander. Even Gibbon — even the frosty Gibbon — condescends to be pleased with this seasonable application of his two termini: — 'Our sense,' says he, in his 40th chapter, 'of the dignity of human nature is exalted [10] by the simple recollection, that Isocrates was the companion of Plato and Xenophon; that he assisted, perhaps with the historian Thucydides, at the first representations of the Œdipus of Sophocles and the Iphigenia of Euripides.' So far in relation to the upper terminus of the long man; next, with reference to the lower terminus, Gibbon goes on: — and that his pupils, Æschines and Demosthenes, contended for the *crown* of patriotism in the presence of Aristotle, the master of Theophrastus, who taught at Athens with the founders of the Stoic and Epicurean sects.'

Now then, reader, you are arrived at that station from which you overlook the whole of Greek literature, as a few explanations will soon convince you. Where is Homer, where is Hesiod? You ask — where is Pindar? Homer and Hesiod lived a thousand years B. C., or, by the lowest computations, near nine hundred. For anything that we know, they may have lived with Tubal Cain. At all events, they belong to no power or agency that set in motion the age of Pericles, or that operated on that age. Pindar, again, was a solitary emanation of some unknown influences, at Thebes, more than five hundred years B. C. He may

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be referred to the same era as Pythagoras. These are all that can be cited *before* Pericles.

Next, for the ages *after* Alexander, it is certain that Greece Proper was so much broken in spirit by the loss of her *autonomy* dating from that era — as never again to have rallied sufficiently to produce a single man of genius; not one solitary writer, who acted as a power upon the national mind. Callimachus was nobody, and not decidedly Grecian. Theocritus, a man of real genius in a limited way, is a Grecian in that sense only according to which an Anglo-American is an Englishman. Besides that, one swallow does not make a summer. Of any other writers, we possess only a few fragments: and of Anacreon, who must have been a poet of original power, from the very extended influence of his writings, we do not certainly know that we have any remains at all. Of those which pass under his name, not merely the authorship, but the era is very questionable indeed. Plutarch and Lucian, the unlearned reader must understand that both belong to *post* Christian ages. And for all the Greek emigrants who may have written histories, such as we now value for their matter more than for their execution, one and all they belong too much to Roman civilization, that we should ever think of connecting them with native Greek literature.[11] Polybius in the days of the second Scipio, Dion Cassius, and Appian, in the acmé of Roman civility, are no more Grecian authors, because they wrote in Greek, than the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, or Julian, were other than Romans, because, from monstrous coxcombry, they chose to write in Greek their barren memoranda. As well might Gibbon be thought not an Englishman, or

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Leibnitz not a German; because the former, in composing the first draft of his essay on literature, and the latter in composing his *Theodicée*, used the French language. The motive in all these cases was analogous: amongst the Greek writers it was the affectation of reaching a particular body of educated men, a learned class, to the exclusion of the uninstructed multitude. With the affectors of French, the wish was, to reach a particular body of thinkers, with whose feelings they had a special sympathy from personal habituation to their society, and to whose prejudices, literary or philosophic, they had adapted their train of argument.

No: the Greek literature ends at the point we have fixed, viz., with the era of Alexander. No power, no heart-subduing agency, was ever again incarnated in any book, system of philosophy, or other model of creative energy, growing upon Grecian soil or from Grecian roots. Creation was extinct — the volcano was burned out. What books appeared at scattered intervals, during the three centuries still remaining before the Christian era, lie under a reproach, one and all, which perhaps has not been perceived. From the titles and passing notices of their objects, or mode of dealing with their objects, such as we derive from Cicero and many others, it is evident that they were merely professional books; text-books for lectures addressed to students, or polemic works addressed to competitors. Chairs of rhetoric and philosophy had now been founded in Athens. A great university, the resort of students from all nations, was established, and, in a sense sufficient to insure the perpetual succession of these corporate bodies, was endowed. Books, therefore, and laboring with the same two opposite defects,

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as are unjustly charged upon the schoolmen of the middle ages, viz., dulness from absolute monotony, and visionariness from the aërial texture of the speculations, continued to be written in discharge of professional obligations, or in pursuit of professional interest. The *summum bonum* was discussed until it had become the capital affliction of human patience; the *summum malum* of human life. Beyond these there was no literature; and these products of dreaming indolence, which terminated in making the very name of Greek philosopher, and Greek rhetorician, a jest and a byword amongst the manlier Romans, no more constituted a literature than a succession of academic studies from the pupils of a royal institution can constitute a school of fine arts.

Here, therefore, at this era of Alexander, 333 B. C., when every Greek patriot had reason to say of his native literature, '*Venimus ad summum fortunæ*' — we have seen the best of our days — we must look for the Greek ideas of style, and the Greek theories of composition, in the uttermost development that either *could* have received. In the earlier system of Greek intellectual strength — in the era of Pericles, the powers of style would be most comprehensively exercised. In the second system, in the era of Alexander, the light of conscious recognition and direct examination would be most effectually applied. The first age furnished the power — the second furnished the science. The first brought the concrete model — the second brought the abstracting skill; and between them the whole compass of Greek speculation upon this point would be brought to a focus. Such being the state of preparation, what was the result?

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PART IV.

'*Such being the state of preparation, what was the result?*' These were the words which concluded our last essay. There had been two manifestations of the Grecian intellect, revelations in two separate forms, the first having gathered about Pericles in the year 444 B. C., the second about Alexander the Great in 333 B. C.; the first being a pure literature of creative power, the second, in a great measure, of reflective power; the first fitted to call out the differences of style, the second to observe, classify, and discuss them: under these circumstances of favorable preparation, what had been the result? Where style exists in strong coloring as a practice or art, we reasonably expect that style should soon follow as a theory — as a science explaining that art, tracing its varieties, and teaching its rules. To use ancient distinctions, where the '*rhetorica utens*' has been cultivated with eminent success, (as in early Greece it had,) it is but natural to expect many consequent attempts at a '*rhetorica docens.*' And especially, it is natural to do so in a case where the theorizing intellect had been powerfully awakened. What, therefore, we ask again, had been in fact the result?

We must acknowledge that it had fallen far below the reasonable standard of our expectations. Greece, it is true, produced a long series of works on rhetoric; many of which, though not easily met with,[12] survive to this day: and one which stands first in order of time — viz. the great work of Aristotle — is of such distinguished merit, that some eminent moderns have not scrupled to rank it as the very foremost legacy, in

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point of psychological knowledge, which Pagan literature has bequeathed to us. Without entering upon so large a comparison as that, we readily admit the commanding talent which this work displays. But it is under an equivocal use of the word 'rhetoric' that the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle could ever have been classed with books treating of style. There is in fact a complex distinction to which the word rhetoric is liable: 1st, it means the *rhetorica utens*, as when we praise the rhetoric of Seneca or Sir Thomas Browne; not meaning anything which they taught, but something which they practised; not a doctrine which they delivered, but a machinery of composition which they employed. 2dly, it means the *rhetorica docens*, as when we praise the rhetoric of Aristotle or Hermogenes; writers far enough from being rhetorical by their own style of writing, but writers who professedly taught others to be rhetorical. 3dly, the *rhetorica utens* itself is subdivided into two meanings, so wide apart that they have very little bearing on each other: one being applied to the art of persuasion, the dexterous use of plausible topics for recommending any opinion whatever to the favor of an audience: this is the Grecian sense universally; the other being applied to the art of composition — the art of treating any subject ornamentally, gracefully, affectingly. There is another use of the word rhetoric distinct from all these, and hitherto, we believe, not consciously noticed: of which at some other time.

Now, this last subdivision of the word rhetoric, viz. 'Rhetoric considered as a practising art — *rhetorica utens*,' which is the sense exclusively indicated by our modern use of the term, is not at all concerned in the

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rhetoric of Aristotle. It is rhetoric as a mode of moral suasion, as a technical system for obtaining a readiness in giving to the false a coloring of plausibility, to the doubtful a coloring of probability, or in giving to the true, when it happens to be obscure, the benefit of a convincing exposition — this it is which Aristotle undertakes to teach: and not at all the art of ornamental composition. In fact, it is the whole body of public *extempore* speakers whom he addresses, not the body of deliberate writers in any section whatever. And therefore, whilst conceding readily all the honor which is claimed for that great man's rhetoric, by this one distinction as to what it was that he meant by rhetoric, we evade at once all necessity for modifying our general proposition; viz. that style in our modern sense, as a theory of composition, as an art of constructing sentences and weaving them into coherent wholes, was not effectually cultivated amongst the Greeks. It was not so well understood, nor so distinctly contemplated in the light of a separate accomplishment, as afterwards among the Romans. And we repeat, that this result from circumstances *primâ facie* so favorable to the very opposite result, is highly remarkable. It is *so* remarkable, that we shall beg permission to linger a little upon those features in the Greek literature, which most of all might seem to have warranted our expecting from Greece the very consummation of this delicate art. For these same features, which would separately have justified that expectation, may happen, when taken in combination with others, to account for its disappointment.

There is, then, amongst the earliest phenomena of the Greek literature, and during its very inaugural period,

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one which of itself and singly furnishes a presumption for expecting an exquisite investigation of style. It lies in the fact, that two out of the three great tragic poets carried his own characteristic quality of style to a morbid excess; to such an excess as should force itself, and in fact *did* force itself, into popular notice. Had these poets all alike exhibited that sustained and equable tenor of tragic style which we find in Sophocles, it is not probable that the vulgar attention would have been fixed by its character. Where a standard of splendor is much raised, provided all parts are simultaneously raised on the same uniform scale, we know by repeated experience in many modes of display, whether in dress, in architecture, in the embellishment of rooms, &c., that this raising of the standard is not perceived with much vivacity; and that the feelings of the spectator are soon reconciled to alterations that are harmonized. It is always by some want of uniformity, some defect in following out the scale, that we become roused to conscious observation of the difference between this and our former standards. We exaggerate these differences in such a case, as much as we undervalue them in a case where all is symmetrical. We might expect, therefore, beforehand, that the opposite characteristics as to style of Æschylus and Euripides, would force themselves upon the notice of the Athenian populace; and, in fact, we learn from the Greek scholiasts on these poets, that this effect did really follow. These scholiasts, indeed, belong to a later age. But we know by traditions which they have preserved, and we know from Aristotle himself, the immediate successor of the great tragic poets, (indirectly we know also from the stormy

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ridicule of Aristophanes, who may be viewed as contemporary with those poets,) that Æschylus was notorious to a proverb amongst the very mob, for the stateliness, pomp, and towering character of his diction; whilst Euripides was equally notorious, not merely for a diction in a lower key, more household, more natural, less elaborate, but also for cultivating such a diction by study and deliberate preference. Having such great models of contrasting style to begin with, having the attention converged upon these differences by the furious merriment of Aristophanes, less than a Grecian wit would have felt a challenge in all this to the investigation of style, as a great organ of difference between man and man, between poet and poet.

But there was a more enduring reason, in the circumstances of Greece for entitling us to expect from her the perfect theory of style. It lay in those accidents of time and place which obliged Greece to spin most of her speculations, like a spider, out of her own bowels. Now, for such a kind of literature style is, generally speaking, paramount; for a literature less self-evolved, style is more liable to neglect. Modern nations have labored under the very opposite disadvantage. The excess of external materials has sometimes oppressed their creative power, and sometimes their meditative power. The exuberance of *objective* knowledge — that knowledge which carries the mind to materials existing *out* of itself, such as natural philosophy, chemistry, physiology, astronomy, geology, where the mind of the student goes for little, and the external object for much — has had the effect of weaning men from subjective speculation,

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where the mind is all in all, and the alien object next to nothing; and in that degree has weaned them from the culture of style. Now, on the other hand, if you suppose a man in the situation of Baron Trenck at Spandau, or Spinosa in the situation of Robinson Crusoe at Juan Fernandez, or a contemplative monk of the thirteenth century in his cell — you will perceive that — unless he were a poor feeble-minded creature like Cowper's Bastile prisoner, thrown by utter want of energy upon counting the very nails of his dungeon in all permutations and combinations — rather than quit the external world, he must in his own defence, were it only as a relief from gnawing thoughts, cultivate some *subjective* science; that is, some branch of knowledge which, drawing everything from the mind itself, is independent of external resources. Such a science is found in the relations of man to God, that is in theology; in the determinations of space, that is in geometry; in the relations of existence or being universally to the human mind, otherwise called metaphysics or ontology; in the relations of the mind to itself, otherwise called logic. Hence it was that the scholastic philosophy evolved itself, like a vast spider's loom, between the years 1100 and 1400. Men shut up in solitude — with the education oftentimes of scholars — with a life of leisure — but with hardly any books, and no means of observation — were absolutely forced, if they would avoid lunacy, from energies unoccupied with any object, to create an object out of those very energies: they were driven by mere pressure of solitude, and sometimes of external silence, into raising vast aërial Jacob's ladders of vapory metaphysics, just as endless as those meteorologic

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phenomena which technically bear that name — just as sublime and aspiring in their tendency upwards — and sometimes (but not always, wicked critic!) just as unsubstantial. In this land of the practical and the ponderable, we so little understand or value such abstractions, though once our British schoolmen took the lead in these subtleties, that we confound their very natures and names. Most people with us mean by metaphysics, what is properly called psychology. Now, these two are so far from being the same thing, that the former could be pursued (and, to say the truth, was, in fact, under Aristotle created) by the monk in his unfurnished cell, where nothing ever entered but moonbeams. Whereas psychology is but in part a subjective science; in some proportion it is also *objective*, depending on multiplied experience, or on multiplied records of experience. Psychology, therefore, *could* not have been cultivated extensively by the schoolmen; and in fact would not have been cultivated at all, but for the precedent of Aristotle. He, who laid the foundation of their metaphysics, which have nothing to do with man, had also written a work on man; viz. on the human soul, besides other smaller works on particular psychological phenomena (such as dreaming). Hence, through mere imitation, arose the short sketches of psychology amongst the schoolmen. Else *their* vocation lay to metaphysics, and that vocation arose entirely out of their circumstances — solitude, scholarship, and no books. Total extinction there was for them of all objective materials, and therefore, as a consequence inevitable, reliance on the solitary energies of their own minds. Like Christabel's chamber lamp, and the angels from which it was suspended, all was the invention of the unprompted artist.

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'All made out of the carver's brain.'

Models he had none before him, for printed books were yet sleeping in futurity, and the gates of a grand asceticism were closed upon the world of life. We moderns, indeed, fancy that the necessities of the Romish church — the mere instincts of self-protection in Popery—were what offered the bounty on this air-woven philosophy; and partly that is true; but it is most certain that all the bounties in this world would have failed to operate effectually, had they not met with those circumstances in the silent life of monasteries, which favored the growth of such a self-spun metaphysical divinity. Monastic life predisposed the restlessness of human intellect to move in that direction. It was one of the few directions compatible with solitude and penury of books. It was the only one that opened an avenue at once to novelty and to freedom of thought. Now, then, precisely what the monastic life of the schoolmen was, in relation to philosophy, the Greece of Pericles had been in relation to literature. What circumstances, what training, or predisposing influences existed for the monk in his cell; the same (or such as were tantamount) existed for the Grecian wit in the atmosphere of Athens. Three great agencies were at work, and unconsciously moulding the efforts of the earliest schoolmen about the opening of the Crusades, and of the latest, some time after their close; — three analogous agencies, the same in virtue, though varied in circumstances, gave impulse and guidance to the men of Greece, from Pericles, at the opening of Greek literature, to Alexander of Macedon, who witnessed its second harvest. And these agencies were: — 1st. Leisure in excess, with a teeming intellect:

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the burden, under a new-born excitement, of having nothing to do. 2d. Scarcity, without an absolute famine, of books; enough to awake the dormant cravings, but not enough to gratify them without personal participation in the labors of intellectual creation. 3d. A revolutionary restlessness, produced by the recent establishment of a new and growing public interest.

The two first of these agencies, for stimulating intellects already roused by agitating changes, are sufficiently obvious; though few, perhaps, are aware to what extent idleness prevailed in Pagan Greece, and even in Rome, under the system of household slavery, and under the bigoted contempt of commerce. But, waiving that point, and, for the moment, waiving also the degree of scarcity which affected books at the era of Pericles, we must say one word as to the two great analogous public interests which had formed themselves separately, and with a sense of revolutionary power, for the Greeks on the one hand, and for the schoolmen on the other. As respected the Grecians, and especially the Athenians, this excitement lay in the sentiment of nationality which had been first powerfully organized by the Persian war. Previously to that war the sentiment no doubt smouldered obscurely; but the oriental invasion it was which kindled it into a torrent of flame. And it is interesting to remark, that the very same cause which fused and combined these scattered tribes into the unity of Hellas, viz. their common interest in making head against an awful invader, was also the cause which most of all separated them into local parties by individual rivalship, and by characteristic services. The arrogant Spartan, and with a French-like self-glorification,

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boasted forever of his little Thermopylæ. Ten years earlier the far sublimer display of Athenian Marathon, to say nothing of after services at Salamis, or elsewhere, had placed Attica at the summit of the Greek family. No matter whether selfish jealousy would allow that pre-eminence to be recognized, doubtless it was felt. With this civic pre-eminence arose concurrently for Athens the development of an intellectual pre-eminence. On this we need say nothing. But even here, although the pre-eminence was too dazzling to have been at any time overlooked, yet, with some injustice in every age to Athens, her light has been recognized, but not what gave it value — the contrasting darkness of all around her. This did not escape Paterculus, whose understanding is always vigilant. 'We talk,' says he, 'of *Grecian* eloquence, or *Grecian* poetry, when we should say *Attic:* for who has ever heard of Theban orators, of Lacedæmonian artists, or Corinthian poets?'[13] Æschylus, the first great author of Athens, (for Herodotus was not Athenian,) personally fought in the Persian war. Consequently the two modes of glory for Athens were almost of simultaneous emergence. And what we are now wishing to insist on, is, that precisely by and through this great unifying event, viz. the double inroad of Asia militant upon Greece, Greece first became generally and reciprocally known to Greece herself: that Greece was then first arranged and *cast*, as it were, dramatically, according to her capacities, services, duties; that a general consciousness was then diffused of the prevailing relations in which each political family stood to the rest; and that, in the leading states, every intellectual citizen drew a most agitating excite-

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ment from the particular character of glory which had settled upon his own tribe, and the particular station which had devolved upon it amongst the champions of civilization.

That was the *positive* force acting upon Athens. Now, reverting to the monkish schoolmen, in order to complete the parallel, what was the corresponding force acting upon *them*? Leisure, and want of books, were accidents common to both parties — to the scholastic age and to the age of Pericles. These were the *negative* forces; concurring with others to sustain a movement once begun, but incapable of giving the original impulse. What was the active, the *affirmative* force, which effected for the scholastic monks that unity and sense of common purposes, which had been effected for the Greeks by the sudden development of a Grecian interest opposed to a Persian — of a civilized interest, under sudden peril, opposed to the barbarism of the universal planet?

What was there for the race of monkish schoolmen, laboring through three centuries, in the nature of a known palpable interest, which could balance so grand a principle of union and of effort, as this acknowledged guardianship of civilization had suddenly unfolded, like a banner, for the Greeks during the infancy of Pericles?[14] What *could* there be of corresponding grandeur?

Beforehand, this should have seemed impossible. But, in reality, a far grander mode of interest had arisen for the schoolmen; grander, because more indefinite; more indefinite, because spiritual. It was this: — The Western or Latin Church had slowly developed her earthly power. As an edifice of civil

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greatness, throughout the western world, she stood erect and towering. In the eleventh century, beyond all others, she had settled her deep foundations. The work thus far was complete. But blank civil power, though indispensable, was the feeblest of her arms; and, taken separately, was too frail to last, besides that it was liable to revolutions. The authority by which chiefly she ruled, had ruled, and hoped to rule, was spiritual; and with the growing institutions of the age, embodying so much of future resistance, it was essential that this spiritual influence should be founded on a subtle philosophy — difficult to learn, difficult to refute; as also that many dogmas already established, such as tradition, by way of prop to infallibility, should receive a far ampler development. The Latin church, we must remember, was not yet that church of Papal Rome, in the maturity of its doctrines and its pretensions, which it afterwards became. And when we consider how vast a benefactrix this church had been to early Christendom, when moulding and settling its foundations, as also in what light she must have appeared to her own pious children, in centuries where as yet only the first local breezes of opposition had begun to whisper amongst the Albigenses, &c., we are bound, in all candor, to see that a sublimer interest could not have existed for any series of philosophers, than the profound persuasion, that by marrying metaphysics to divinity, two sciences even separately so grand: and by the pursuit of labyrinthine truth, they were building up an edifice reaching to the heavens — the great spiritual fortress of the Catholic church.

Here let us retrace the course of our speculations, lest the reader should suppose us to be wandering.

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First, for the sake of illustrating more vividly the influences which acted on the Greece of Pericles, we bring forward another case analogously circumstanced, as moulded by the same causes; — 1. The same condition of intellect under revolutionary excitement: 2. The same penury of books: 3. The same chilling gloom from the absence of female charities; the consequent reaction of that oppressive *eunui*, which Helvetius fancied, amongst all human agencies, to be the most potent stimulant for the intellect: 4. The same (though far different) enthusiasm and elevation of thought, from disinterested participation in forwarding a great movement of the age; for the one side, involving the glory of their own brilliant country, and concurrent with civilization; for the other, co-extensive with all spiritual truth and all spiritual power.

Next, we remark, that men living permanently under such influences, must, of mere necessity, resort to that order of intellectual pursuits which requires little aid *ab extra;* that order, in fact, which philosophically is called 'subjective,' as drawing much from our own proper selves, or little (if anything) from extraneous objects.

And then, thirdly, we remark, that such pursuits are peculiarly favorable to the culture of style. In fact, they force that culture. A man who has absolute facts to communicate from some branch of study, external to himself, as physiology, suppose, or anatomy, or astronomy, is careless of style; or, at least, he may be so, because he is independent of style; for what he has to communicate, neither readily admits, nor much needs, any graces in the mode of communication; the matter transcends and oppresses the man-

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ner. The matter tells without any manner at all. But he who has to treat a vague question, such as Cicero calls a *quæstio infinita*, where everything is to be finished out of his own peculiar feelings, or his own way of viewing things, (in contradistinction to a *quæstio infiniti*, where determinate *data* from without, already furnish the main materials,) soon finds that the manner of treating it not only transcends the matter, but very often, and in a very great proportion, *is* the matter. In very many subjective exercises of the mind, as, for instance, in that class of poetry which has been formally designated by this epithet, (meditative poetry, we mean, in opposition to the Homeric, which is intensely objective,) the problem before the writer is — to project his own inner mind; to bring out consciously what yet lurks by involution in many unanalyzed feelings; in short, to pass through a prism, and radiate into distinct elements, what previously had been even to himself but dim and confused ideas, intermixed with each other. Now, in such cases, the skill with which detention or conscious arrest is given to the evanescent, external projection to what is internal, outline to what is fluxionary, and body to what is vague — all this depends entirely on the command over language, as the one sole means of embodying ideas. And, in such cases, the style, or, in the largest sense, *manner*, is confluent with the matter. But, at all events, even by those who are most impatient of any subtleties, or what they consider 'metaphysical' distinctions, thus much must be conceded — viz. that those who rest upon external facts, tangible realities, and circumstantial details, in short, generally upon the *objective*, whether in a case of narration or

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of argument, must forever be less dependent upon style, than those who have to draw upon their own understandings and their own peculiar feelings for the furniture and matter of their composition. A single illustration will make this plain. It is an old remark, and, in fact, a subject of continual experience, that lawyers fail as public speakers in the House of Commons. Even Erskine, the greatest of modern advocates, was nobody as a senator; and the 'fluent Murray,' two generations before him, had found his fluency give way under that mode of trial. But why? How was it possible that a man's fluency in one chamber of public business, should thus suddenly be defeated and confounded in another? The reason is briefly expressed in Cicero's distinction between a *quæstio finita* and a *quæstio infinita*. In the courts of law, the orator was furnished with a brief; an abstract of facts; downright statements upon oath; circumstances of presumption; and, in short, a whole volume of topics external to his own mind. Sometimes, it is true, the advocate would venture a little out to sea, *proprio marti:* in a case of *crim. con.*, for instance, he would attempt a little picture of domestic happiness drawn from his own funds. But he was emboldened to do this from his certain knowledge, that in the facts of his brief he had always a hasty retreat in case of any danger that he should founder. If the little picture prospered, it was well: if not, if symptoms of weariness began to arise in the audience, or of hesitation in himself, it was but to cut the matter short, and return to the *terra firma* of his brief, when all again was fluent motion. Besides that each separate transition, and the distribution of the general subject offered

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themselves spontaneously in a law case; the logic was given as well as the method. Generally speaking, the mere order of chronology dictated the succession and arrangement of the topics. Now on the other hand, in a House of Commons' oration, although sometimes there may occur statements of facts and operose calculations, still these are never more than a text, at the very best, for the political discussion, but often no more than a subsequent illustration or proof attached to some one of its heads. The main staple of any long speech must always be some general view of national policy; and, in Cicero's language, such a view must always be *infinita* — that is, not determined *ab extra*, but shaped and drawn from the funds of one's own understanding. The facts are here subordinate and ministerial; in the case before a jury, the facts are all in all. The forensic orator satisfies his duty, if he does but take the facts exactly as they stand in his brief, and place them before his audience in that order, and even (if he should choose it) in those words. The parliamentary orator has no opening for facts at all, but as he himself may be able to create such an opening by some previous expositions of doctrine or opinion, of the probable or the expedient. The one is always creeping along shore — the other is always out at sea. Accordingly, the degrees of anxiety which severally affect the two cases, is best brought to the test in this one question — '*What shall I say next?*' — an anxiety besetting orators like that which besets poor men in respect to their children's daily bread. — 'This moment it is secured; but, alas! for the next!' Now, the judicial orator finds an instant relief: the very points of the case are numbered; and, if he cannot

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find more to say upon No. 7, he has only to pass on, and call up No. 8. Whereas, the deliberative orator, in a senate or a literary meeting, finds himself always in this situation — that having reached with difficulty that topic which we have supposed to be No. 7, one of three cases uniformly occurs: either he does not perceive any No. 8 at all; or, secondly, he sees a distracting choice of No. 8's — the ideas to which he might next pass are many, but he does not see whither they will lead him; or, thirdly, he sees a very fair and promising No. 8, but cannot in any way discover, offhand, how he is to effect a transition to this new topic. He cannot, with the rapidity requisite, modulate out of the one key into the other. His anxiety increases, utter confusion masters him, and he breaks down.

We have made this digression by way of seeking, in a well known case of public life, an illustration of the difference between a subjective and an objective exercise of the mind. It is the sudden translation from the one exercise to the other, which, and which only, accounts for the failure of advocates when attempting senatorial efforts. Once used to depend on memorials or briefs of facts, or of evidence not self-derived, the advocate, like a child in leading-strings, loses that command over his own internal resources, which otherwise he might have drawn from practice. In fact, the advocate, with his brief lying before him, is precisely in the condition of a parliamentary speaker, who places a written speech or notes for a speech in his hat. This trick has sometimes been practised: and the consternation which would befall the orator in the case of such a hat-speech being suddenly blown away, precisely realizes the situation of a *nisi prius*

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orator when first getting on his legs in the House of Commons. He has swum with bladders all his life: suddenly he must swim without them.

This case explains why it is, that all subjective branches of study favor the cultivation of style. — Whatsoever is entirely independent of the mind, and external to it, is generally equal to its own enunciation. Ponderable facts and external realities are intelligible in almost any language: they are self-explained and self-sustained. But the more closely any exercise of mind is connected with what is internal and individual in the sensibilities, that is, with what is philosophically termed *subjective*, precisely in that degree, and the more subtly, does the style or the embodying of the thoughts cease to be a mere separable ornament, and in fact the more does the manner, as we expressed it before, become confluent with the matter. In saying this, we do but vary the form of what we once heard delivered on this subject by Mr. Wordsworth: his remark was by far the weightiest thing we ever heard on the subject of style; and it was this — That it is in the highest degree unphilosophic to call language or diction 'the *dress* of thoughts;' and what was it then that he would substitute? Why this: he would call it 'the *incarnation* of thoughts.' Never, in one word, was so profound a truth conveyed. Mr. Wordsworth was thinking, doubtless, of poetry like his own; viz. that which is eminently meditative. And the truth is apparent on consideration: for, if language were merely a dress, then you could separate the two: you could lay the thoughts on the left hand, the language on the right. But, generally speaking, you can no more deal thus with poetic thoughts, than you can with soul

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and body. The union is too subtle; the intertexture too ineffable, each co-existing not merely *with* the other, but each *in* and *through* the other. An image, for instance, a single word, often enters into a thought as a constituent part. In short, the two elements are not united as a body with a separable dress, but as a mysterious incarnation. And thus, in what proportion the thoughts are subjective, in that same proportion does their very essence become identical with the expression, and the style become confluent with the matter.

The Greeks, by want of books, philosophical instruments, and innumerable other aids to all objective researches, being thrown more exclusively than we upon their own unaided minds, cultivated logic, ethics, metaphysics, psychology — all thoroughly subjective studies. The schoolmen, in the very same situation, cultivated precisely the same field of knowledge. The Greeks, indeed, added to their studies that of geometry; for the inscription over the gate of the Academy (Let no one enter who is not instructed in geometry) sufficiently argues that this science must have made some progress in the days of Pericles, when it could thus be made a general qualification for admission to a learned establishment within thirty years after his death. But geometry is partly an objective, partly a subjective study. With this exception, the Greeks and the monastic schoolmen trode the very same path.

Consequently, in agreement with our principle, both ought to have found themselves in circumstances favorable to the cultivation of style. And it is certain that they did. As an *art*, as a practice, it was felicitously pursued in both cases. It is true that the harsh

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ascetic mode of treating philosophy by the schoolmen, generated a corresponding barrenness, aridity and repulsiveness, in the rigid forms of their technical language. But however offensive to genial sensibilities, this diction was a perfect thing in its kind; and, to do it justice, we ought rather to compare it with the exquisite language of algebra, equally irreconcilable to all standards of æsthetic beauty; but yet for the three qualities of elliptical rapidity, (that rapidity which constitutes what is meant by elegance in mathematics,) — of absolute precision — and of simplicity, this algebraic language is unrivalled amongst human inventions. On the other hand, the Greeks, whose objects did not confine them to these austere studies, carried out their corresponding excellence in style upon a far wider and indeed a comprehensive scale. Almost all modes of style were exemplified amongst *them*. Thus, we endeavor to show that the subjective pursuits of the Greeks and the schoolmen ought to have favored a command of appropriate diction; and afterwards that it did.

But, fourthly, we are entitled to expect — that wherever style exists in great development as a practice, it will soon be investigated with corresponding success as a theory. If fine music is produced spontaneously in short snatches by the musical sensibility of a people, it is a matter of certainty that a science of composition, that counterpoint, that thorough-bass, will soon be cultivated with a commensurate zeal. This is matter of such obvious inference, that in any case where it fails, we look for some extraordinary cause to account for it. Now, in Greece, with respect to style, the inference *did* fail. Style, as an art, was in

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a high state of culture: style, as a science, was nearly neglected. How is this to be accounted for? It arose naturally enough out of one great phenomenon in the condition of ancient times, and the relation which that bore to literature, and to all human exertion of the intellect.

Did the reader ever happen to reflect on the great idea of *Publication?* An idea we call it; because, even in our own times, with all the mechanic aids of steam-presses, &c., this object is most imperfectly approached, and is destined, perhaps, forever to remain an unattainable ideal; useful (like all ideals) in the way of regulating our aims, but also as a practicable object not reconcilable with the limitation of human power. For it is clear that, if books were multiplied by a thousand-fold, and truth of all kinds were carried to the very fireside of every family, nay, placed below the eyes of every individual, still the purpose of any universal publication would be defeated and utterly confounded, were it only by the limited opportunities of readers. One condition of publication defeats another. Even so much as a general publication is a hopeless idea. Yet, on the other hand, publication, in some degree, and by some mode, is a *sine qua non* condition for the generation of literature. Without a larger sympathy than that of his own personal circle, it is evident that no writer could have a motive for those exertions and previous preparations, without which excellence is not attainable in any art whatsoever.

Now, in our own times, it is singular, and really philosophically curious, to remark the utter blindness of writers, readers, publishers, and all parties whatever

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interested in literature, as to the trivial fraction of publicity which settles upon each separate work. The very multiplication of books has continually defeated the object in a growing progression. Readers have increased, the engines of publication have increased; but books, increasing in a still greater proportion, have left as the practical result — an average quotient of publicity for each book, taken apart, continually decreasing. And if the whole world were readers, probably the average publicity for each separate work would reach a *minimum* — such would be the concurrent increase of books. But even this view of the case keeps out of sight the most monstrous forms of this phenomenon. The inequality of the publication has the effect of keeping very many books absolutely without a reader. The majority of books are never opened; five hundred copies may be printed, or half as many more; of these, it may happen, that five are carelessly turned over. Popular journals, again, which carry a promiscuous miscellany of papers into the same number of hands, as a stage-coach must convey all its passengers at the rame rate of speed, dupe the public with a notion that here at least all are read. Not at all. One or two are read from the interest attached to their subjects. Occasionally one is read a little from the ability with which it treats a subject not otherwise attractive. The rest have a better chance certainly than books, because they are at any rate placed under the eye and in the hand of readers. But this is no more than a variety of the same case. A hasty glance may be taken by one in a hundred at the less attractive papers; but reading is out of the question. Then, again, another delusion, by which all parties disguise

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the truth, is, the absurd belief that, not being read at present, a book may, however, be revived hereafter. Believe it not! This is possible only with regard to books that demand to be studied, where the merit is slowly discovered. Every month, every day indeed, produces its own novelties, with the additional zest that they *are* novelties. Every future year, which will assuredly fail in finding time for its own books, how should it find time for defunct books? No, no — every year buries its own literature. Since Waterloo, there have been added upwards of fifty thousand books and pamphlets to the shelves of our *native* literature, taking no account of foreign importations. Of these fifty thousand, possibly two hundred still survive; possibly twenty will survive for a couple of centuries; possibly five or six thousand may have been indifferently read: the rest not so much as opened. In this hasty sketch of a calculation, we assume a single copy to represent a whole edition. But in order to have the total sum of copies numerically neglected since Waterloo, it will be requisite to multiply forty-four thousand by five hundred at the least, but probably by a higher multiplier. At the very moment of writing this — by way of putting into a brighter light the inconceivable blunder as to publicity habitually committed by sensible men of the world — let us mention what we now see before us in a public journal. Speaking with disapprobation of a just but disparaging expression applied to the French war-mania by a London morning paper, the writer has described it as likely to irritate the people of France. O, genius of arithmetic! The offending London journal has a circulation of four thousand copies daily — and it is assumed that thirty-

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three millions, of whom assuredly not twenty-five individuals will ever see the English paper as a visible object, nor five ever read the passage in question, are to be maddened by one word in a colossal paper laid this morning on a table amongst fifty others, and to-morrow morning pushed off that table by fifty others of more recent date. How are such delusions possible? Simply from the previous delusion, of ancient standing, connected with printed characters: what is printed seems to every man invested with some fatal character of publicity such as cannot belong to mere MS.; whilst in the meantime, out of every thousand printed pages, one at the most, but at all events a very small proportion indeed, is in any true sense more public when printed than previously as a manuscript; and that one, even that thousandth part, perishes as effectually in a few days to each separate reader, as the words perish in our daily conversation. Out of all that we talk, or hear others talk, through the course of a year, how much remains on the memory at the closing day of December? Quite as little, we may be sure, survives from most people's reading. A book answers its purpose by sustaining the intellectual faculties in motion through the current act of reading; and a general deposition or settling takes effect from the sum of what we read; even that, however, chiefly according to the previous condition in which the book finds us for understanding it, and referring them to heads under some existing arrangement of our knowledge. Publication is an idle term applied to what is not published: and nothing is *published* which is not made known *publicly* to the understanding as well as to the eye: whereas, for the enormous majority of

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what is printed, we cannot say so much as that it is made known to the eyes.

For what reason have we insisted on this unpleasant view of a phenomenon incident to the limitation of our faculties, and apparently without remedy? Upon another occasion it might have been useful to do so, were it only to impress upon every writer the vast importance of compression. Simply to retrench one word from each sentence, one superfluous epithet, for example, would probably increase the disposable time of the public by one twelfth part; in other words, would add another month to the year, or raise any sum of volumes read from eleven to twelve hundred. A mechanic operation would effect *that* change: but, by cultivating a closer logic and more severe habits of thinking, perhaps two sentences out of each three might be pruned away; and the amount of possible publication might thus be increased in a threefold degree. A most serious duty, therefore, and a duty which is annually growing in solemnity, appears to be connected with the culture of an unwordy diction; much more, however, with the culture of clear thinking; that being the main key to good writing, and consequently to fluent reading.

But all this, though not unconnected with our general theme, is wide of our immediate purpose. The course of our logic at this point runs in the following order. The Athenians, from causes assigned, ought to have consummated the whole science and theory of style. But they did *not*. Why? Simply from a remarkable deflection or bias given to their studies by a difficulty connected with *publication*. For some modes of literature the Greeks *had* a means of publication, for

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many they had *not*. That one difference, as we shall show, disturbed the just valuation of style.

Some mode of publication must have existed for Athens, that is evident. The mere *fact* of a literature proves it. For without public sympathy how can a literature arise? or public sympathy without a regular organ of publication? What poet would submit to the labors of his most difficult art, if he had no reasonable prospect of a large audience, and somewhat of a permanent audience to welcome and adopt his productions?

Now then, in the Athens of Pericles, what *was* the audience, how composed, and how ensured, on which the literary composer might rely? By what channel, in short, did the Athenian writer calculate on a *publication*?

This is a very interesting question; and, as regards much in the civilization of Greece, both for what it caused and what it prevented, is an important question. In the elder days, in fact we may suppose through the five hundred years from the Trojan expedition to Pisistratus and Solon, all *publication* was effected through two classes of men — the public reciters and the public singers. Thus no doubt it was, that the Iliad and Odyssey were sent down to the hands of Pisistratus, who has the traditional reputation of having first arranged and revised these poems. These reciters or singers to the harp, would probably rehearse one entire book of the Iliad at every splendid banquet. Every book would be kept in remembrance and currency by the peculiar local relations of particular states or particular families to ancestors connected with Troy. This mode of publication, however, had the disadvan-

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tage, that it was among the arts ministerial to sensual enjoyment. And it is some argument for the extensive diffusion of such a practice in the early times of Greece, that both in the Greece of later times, and, by adoption from her, in the Rome of cultivated ages, we find the ἀκροάματα as commonly established by way of a dinner appurtenance — that is, exercises of display addressed to the ear, recitations of any kind with and without music — not at all less frequently than ὁράματα, or the corresponding display to the eye, (dances or combats of gladiators.) These were doubtless inheritances from the ancient usages of Greece, modes of publication resorted to long before the Olympic games, by the mere necessitous cravings for sympathy; and kept up long after that institution, as in itself too brief and rare in its recurrence to satisfy the necessity.

Such was the earliest effort of publication, and in its feeble infancy; for this, besides its limitation in point of audience, was confined to narrative poetry. But when the ideal of Greece was more and more exalted by nearer comparison with barbarous standards, after the sentiment of patriotism had coalesced with vindictive sentiments, and when towering cities began to reflect the grandeur of this land as in a visual mirror, these cravings for publicity became more restless and irrepressible. And at length in the time of Pericles, concurrently with the external magnificence of the city, arose for Athens two modes of publication, each upon a scale of gigantic magnitude.

What were these? The *Theatre* and the *Agora* or Forum; publication by the Stage, and publication by the Hustings. These were the extraordinary modes

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of publication which arose for Athens; one by a sudden birth, like that of Minerva, in the very generation of Pericles; the other slowly maturing itself from the generation of Pisistratus, which preceded that of Pericles by a hundred years. This double publication, scenic and forensic, was virtually, and for all the loftier purposes of publication, the press of Athens. And however imperfect a representative this may seem of a typographical publication, certain it is that in some important features the Athenian publication had separate advantages of its own. It was a far more effective and correct publication, in the first place; enjoying every aid of enforcing accompaniment, from voice, gesture, scenery, music; and suffering in no instance from false reading or careless reading. Then secondly, it was a far wider publication; each drama being read (or heard, which is a far better thing) by twenty-five or thirty thousand persons, counterbalancing at least forty editions, such as we on an average publish, each oration being delivered with just emphasis, to perhaps seven thousand. But why, in this mention of a stage or hustings publication, as opposed to a publication by the printing-press, why was it, we are naturally admonished to ask, that the Greeks had no press? The ready answer will be, because the art of printing had not been discovered. But that is an error, the detection of which we owe to the present Archbishop of Dublin. The art of printing *was* discovered. It had been discovered repeatedly. The art which multiplied the legends upon a coin or medal, (a work which the ancients performed by many degrees better than we moderns, for we make it a mechanic art, they a fine art,) had in effect anticipated the art of printing. It was

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an art, this typographic mystery, which awoke and went back to sleep many times over, from mere defect of materials. Not the defect of typography as an art, but the defect of *paper* as a material for keeping this art in motion — *there* lay the reason, as Dr. Whately most truly observes, why printed books had no existence amongst the Greeks of Pericles, or afterwards amongst the Romans of Cicero. And why was there no paper? The common reason applying to both countries was the want of linen rags; and that want arose from the universal habit of wearing woollen garments. In this respect, Athens and Rome were on the same level. But for Athens, the want was driven to a further extremity by the slenderness of her commerce with Egypt, whence only any substitute could have been drawn.

Even for Rome itself, the scarcity of paper ran through many degrees. Horace, the poet, was amused with the town of Equotuticum for two reasons; as incapable of entering into hexameter verse, from its prosodial quantity, (*versu quod dicere non est,*) and because it purchased water, (*vænit vilissima rerum aqua:*) a circumstance in which it agrees with the well known Clifton, above the hot wells of Bristol, where water is bought by the shilling's worth. But neither Horatian Equotuticum, nor Bristolian Clifton, can ever have been as 'hard up' for water as the Mecca caravan. And the differences were as great, in respect to the want of paper, between the Athens of Pericles or Alexander, and the Rome of Augustus Cæsar. Athens had bad poets, whose names have come down to modern times: but Athens could no more have afforded to punish bad authors by sending their works to grocers —

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'——— in vicum vendentem pus et odores,
Et piper, et quicquid *chartis amicitur ineptis*,'

than London, because gorged with the wealth of two Indies, can afford to pave her streets with silver. This practice of applying unsaleable authors to the ignoble uses of retail dealers in petty articles, must have existed in Rome for some time before it could have attracted the notice of Horace, and upon some considerable scale as a known public usage, before it could have roused any echoes of public mirth as a satiric allusion, or have had any meaning and sting.

In that one revelation of Horace, we see a proof how much paper had become more plentiful. It is true, that so long as men dressed in woollen materials, it was impossible to look for a *cheap* paper. Maga might have been printed at Rome very well for ten guineas a copy. Paper was dear, undoubtedly; but it could be had. On the other hand, how desperate must have been the bankruptcy at Athens in all materials for receiving the record of thoughts, when we find a polished people having no better tickets or cards for conveying their sentiments to the public than shells? Thence came the very name for civil banishment, viz. *ostracism*, because the votes were marked on an *ostracon*, or marine shell. Again, in another great and most splendid city, you see men reduced to *petalism*, or marking their votes by the petals of shrubs. Elsewhere, as indeed many centuries nearer to our own times, in Constantinople, bull's hide was used for the same purpose.

Well might the poor Greeks adopt the desperate expedient of white plastered walls as the best memorandum-book for a man who had thoughts occurring to

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him in the night-time. Brass only, or marble, could offer any lasting memorial for thoughts; and upon what material the parts were written out for the actors on the Athenian stage, or how the elaborate revisals of the text could be carried on, is beyond our power of conjecture.

In this appalling state of embarrassment for the great poet or prose writer, what consequences would naturally arise? A king's favorite and friend like Aristotle might command the most costly materials. For instance, if you look back from this day to 1800, into the advertising records or catalogues of great Parisian publishers, you will find more works of excessive luxury, costing from a thousand *francs* for each copy, all the way up to as many *guineas*, in each separate period of fifteen years, than in the whole forty among the wealthier and more enterprising publishers of Great Britain. What is the explanation? Can the very moderate incomes of the French gentry afford to patronize works which are beyond the purses of our British aristocracy, who, besides, are so much more of a reading class? Not so: the patronage for these Parisian works of luxury is not domestic, it is exotic: chiefly from emperors and kings; from great national libraries; from rich universities; from the grandees of Russia, Hungary, or Great Britain; and generally from those who, living in splendid castles or hotels, require corresponding furniture, and therefore corresponding books; because to such people books are necessarily furniture; since upon the principles of good taste, they must correspond with the splendor of all around them. And in the age of Alexander, there were already purchasers enough among royal houses,

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or the imitators of such houses, to encourage costly copies of attractive works. Aristotle was a privileged man. But in other less favored cases, the strong yearnings for public sympathy were met by blank impossibilities. Much martyrdom, we feel assured, was then suffered by poets. Thousands, it is true, perish in our days, who have never had a solitary reader. But still, the existence *in print* gives a delusive feeling that they have been read. They are standing in the market all day, and somebody, unperceived by themselves, may have thrown an eye upon their wares. The thing is possible. But for the ancient writer there was a sheer physical impossibility that any man should sympathize with what he never could have seen, except under the two conditions we have mentioned.

These two cases there were of exemption from this dire physical resistance; two conditions which made publication possible: and under the horrible circumstances of sequestration for authors in general, need it be said, that to benefit by either advantage was sought with such a zeal as, in effect, extinguished all other literature? If a man could be a poet for the stage, a *scriptor scenicus*, in that case he obtained a hearing. If a man could be admitted as an orator, as a regular *demagogus*, from the popular *bema*, or hustings, in that case he obtained a hearing. If his own thoughts were a torment to him, until they were reverberated from the hearts and flashing eyes and clamorous sympathy of a multitude; thus only an outlet was provided, a mouth was opened, for the volcano surging within his brain. The vast theatre was ar organ of publication; the political forum was an organ of publication.

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And on this twofold arena a torch was applied to that inflammable gas, which exhaled spontaneously from so excitable a mind as the mind of the Athenian.

Need we wonder, then, at the torrent-like determination with which Athenian literature, from the era 444 B. C., to the era 333 B. C., ran headlong into one or other channel — the scenical poetry or the eloquence of the hustings? For an Athenian in search of popular applause, or of sympathy, there was no other avenue to either; unless, indeed, in the character of an artist, or of a leading soldier: but too often, in this latter class, it happened that mercenary foreigners had a preference. And thus it was, that during that period when the popular cast of government throughout Greece awakened patriotic emulation, scarcely anything is heard of in literature (allowing for the succession to philosophic chairs, which made it their pride to be private and exclusive) except dramatic poetry on the one hand, comic or tragic, and political oratory on the other.

As to this last avenue to the public ear, how it was abused, in what excess it became the nuisance and capital scourge of Athens, there needs only the testimony of all contemporary men who happened to stand aloof from that profession, or all subsequent men even of that very profession, who were not blinded by some corresponding interest in some similar system of delusion. Euripides and Aristophanes, contemporary with the earliest practitioners of name and power on that stage of jugglers, are overrun with expressions of horror for these public pests. 'You have every qualification,' says Aristophanes to an aspirant, 'that could be wished for a public orator; φωνη μιαρα — a

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voice like seven devils — *κακος γεγονας* — you are by nature a scamp — *αγοραιος ει* — you are up to snuff in the business of the forum.' From Euripides might be gathered a small volume, relying merely upon so much of his works as yet survives, in illustration of the horror which possessed him for this gang of public misleaders: —

Τουτ' εσθ' ὁ θνητων εν πολεις οικουμενας
Δομους τ' απολλυτ' — οἱ καλοι λιαν λογοι.

'This is what overthrows cities, admirably organized, and the households of men — your superfine harangues.' Cicero, full four centuries later, looking back to this very period from Pericles to Alexander, friendly as he was by the *esprit de corps* to the order of orators, and professionally biased to uphold the civil uses of eloquence; yet, as an honest man, cannot deny that it was this gift of oratory, hideously abused, which led to the overthrow of Athens, and the ruin of Grecian liberty: — 'Illa vetus Græcia, qua quondam opibus, imperio gloriâ floruit, hoc uno malo concidit — *libertate immoderatâ ac licentiâ concionum.*' Quintilian, standing on the very same ground of professional prejudice, all in favor of public orators, yet is forced into the same sorrowful confession. In one of the Declamations ascribed to him, he says — 'Civitatum status scimus ab oratoribus esse conversos;' and in illustration he adds the example of Athens: 'sive illam Atheniensium civitatem, (quondam late principem,) intueri placeat, accisas ejus vires animadvertemus *vitio concionantium.*' Root and branch, Athens was laid prostrate by her wicked radical orators; for radical, in the elliptic phrase of modern politics, they

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were almost to a man; and in this feature above all others, (a feature often scornfully exposed by Euripides,) those technically known as οἱ λεγοντες — the speaking men, and as οἱ δημαγωγοι [15] — the misleaders of the mob, offer a most suitable ancestry for the modern leaders of radicalism — that with their base, fawning flatteries of the people, they mixed up the venom of vipers against their opponents and against the aristocracy of the land.

Ὑπο λυκαινειν ῥηματοις μαγειρικοις —

'Subtly to wheedle the people with honeyed words dressed to its palate' — this had been the ironical advice of the scoffing Aristophanes. That practice made the mob orator contemptible to manly tastes rather than hateful. But the sacrifice of independence — the 'pride which licks the dust' — is the readiest training for all uncharitableness and falsehood towards those who seem either rivals for the same base purposes, or open antagonists for nobler. And accordingly it is remarked by Euripides, that these pestilent abusers of the popular confidence would bring a mischief upon Athens before they had finished, equally by their sycophancies to the mob, and by their libels of foreign princes. Hundreds of years afterwards, a Greek writer, upon reviewing this most interesting period of one hundred and eleven years, from Pericles to Alexander, sums up and repeats the opinion of Euripides in this general representative portrait of Attic oratory, with respect to which we wish to ask, can any better delineation be given of a Chartist, or generically of a modern Jacobin? — Ὁ δημαγωγος κακοδιδασκαλει τους πολλους, λεγων τα κεχαρισμενα — 'The mob-leader dupes the multitude with false doctrines, whilst delivering

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things soothing to their credulous vanity.' This is one half of his office — sychophancy to the immediate purse-holders, and poison to the sources of truth — the other half is expressed with the same spirit of prophecy as regards the British future — *και διαβολαις αυτους εξαλλοτριοι προς τους αριστους*, 'and by lying calumnies he utterly alienates their affections from their own native aristocracy.'

Now this was a base pursuit, though somewhat relieved by the closing example of Demosthenes, who, amidst much frailty, had a generous nature; and he showed it chiefly by his death, and in his lifetime, to use Milton's words, by uttering many times 'odious truth,' which, with noble courage, he compelled the mob to hear. But one man could not redeem a national dishonor. It was such, and such it was felt to be. Men, therefore, of elevated natures, and men of gentle pacific natures, equally revolted from a trade of lies, as regarded the audience, and of strife, as regarded the competitors. There remained the one other pursuit of scenical poetry; and it hardly needs to be said, what crowding there was amongst all the energetic minds of Athens into one or other of these pursuits — the one for the unworldly and idealizing, the other for the coarsely ambitious. These, therefore, became the two *quasi* professions of Athens; and at the same time, in a sense more exclusive than can now be true of *our* professions, became the sole means of publication for truth of any class, and a publication by many degrees more certain, more extensive, and more immediate, than ours by the press.

The Athenian theatre published an edition of thirty thousand copies in one day, enabling, in effect every

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male citizen capable of attending, from the age of twenty to sixty, together with many thousands of domiciled aliens, to read the drama, with the fullest understanding of its sense and poetic force that could be affected by natural powers of voice and action, combined with all possible auxiliaries of art, of music, of pantomimic dancing; and the whole carried home to the heart by visible and audible sympathy in excess. This, but in a very inferior form, as regarded the adjuncts of art, and the scale of the theatre, and the *mise en scène*, was precisely the advantage of Charles I. for appreciating Shakspeare.

It was a standing reproach of the Puritans adopted even by Milton, a leaden shaft feathered and made buoyant by *his* wit, that the king had adopted that stage poet as the companion of his closet retirements. So it would have been a pity, if these malignant persecutors of the royal solitude should have been liars as well as fanatics. Doubtless, as king, and in his afflictions, this storm-vexed man did read Shakspeare. But that was not the original way in which he acquired his acquaintance with the poet. A Prince of Wales, what between public claims and social claims, finds little time for reading, after the period of childhood; that is, at any period when he can comprehend a great poet. And it was as Prince of Wales that Charles prosecuted his studies of Shakspeare. He saw continually at Whitehall, personated by the best actors of the time, illustrated by the stage management, and assisted by the mechanic displays of Inigo Jones, all the principal dramas of Shakspeare actually performed. That was publication with an Athenian advantage. A thousand copies of a book may be brought into public libraries,

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and not one of them opened. But the three thousand copies of a play, which Drury Lane used to publish in one night, were in the most literal sense as well as in spirit read, properly punctuated by the speakers, made intelligible by voice and action, endowed with life and emphasis: in short, on each successive performance, a very large edition of a fine tragedy was published in the most impressive shape; not merely with accuracy, but with a mimic reality that forbade all forgetting, and was liable to no inattention.

Now, if Drury Lane published a drama for Shakspeare by three thousand copies in one night, the Athenian theatre published ten times that amount for Sophocles. And this mode of publication in Athens not co-operating (as in modern times) with other modes, but standing out in solitary conspicuous relief, gave an unnatural bounty upon that one mode of poetic composition: as the hustings did upon one mode of prose composition. And those two modes, being thus cultivated to the utter exclusion of all others not benefiting by that bounty of publication, gave an unnatural bias to the national style; determined, in effect, upon too narrow a scale the operative ideal of composition — and finally made the dramatic artist and the mob orator the two sole intellectual professions for Athens. Hence came a great limitation of style in practice: and hence, for reasons connected with these two modes of composition, a general neglect of style as a didactic theory.

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NOTES.

Note 1. Page 74.

'*Yankee names.*' — Foreigners in America subject themselves to a perpetual misinterpretation by misapplying this term. '*Yankee,*' in the American use, does not mean a citizen of the United States as opposed to a foreigner, but a citizen of the Northern New England States (Massachusetts, Connecticut, &c.) opposed to a Virginian, a Kentuckian, &c.

Note 2. Page 77.

'*An increasing class;*' but not in France. — It is a most remarkable moral phenomenon in the social condition of that nation, and one which speaks a volume as to the lower tone of female dignity, that unmarried women, at the age which amongst us obtains the insulting name of *old maids*, are almost unknown. What shocking sacrifices of sexual honor does this one fact argue?

Note 3. Page 108.

'*No subject.*' — If he had a subject, what was it? As to the great and sole doctrines of Islam — the unity of God, and the mission of Mahomet as his chief prophet, (*i. e.* not vaticinator, but interpreter,) — *that* must be presumed known to every man in a Mussulman army, since otherwise he could not have been admitted into the army. But these doctrines might require expansion, or at least evidence? Not at all; the Mussulman believes them incapable of either. But at least the Caliph might mount the pulpit, in order to urge the primary duty of propagating the true faith? No; it was *not* the primary duty; it was a secondary duty; else there would have been no option allowed — tribute, death, or conversion. Well, then, the Caliph might ascend the pulpit, for the purpose of enforcing a secondary duty? No, he could not; because that was no duty of time or place; it was a postulate of the conscience at all times alike; and needed no argument or illustration. Why,

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then, what *was* it that the Caliph talked about? It was this:—He praised the man who had cut most throats; he pronounced the funeral panegyric of him who had his own throat cut under the banners of the Prophet; he explained the prudential merits of the next movement or of the next campaign. In fact, he did precisely what Pericles did — what Scipio did — what Cæsar did; what it was a regular part of the Roman Imperator's commission to do, both before a battle and after a battle, and, generally, under any circumstances which make an explanation necessary. What is now done in 'general orders,' was then committed to a *vivâ voce* communication. Trifling communications probably devolved on the six centurions of each cohort (or regiment); graver communications were reserved to the Imperator, surrounded by his staff. Why we should mislead the student by calling this solemnity of addressing an army from a *tribunal*, or *suggestus*, by the irrelevant name of preaching from a pulpit, can only be understood by those who perceive the false view taken of the Mahometan faith and its relation to the human mind. It was certainly a poor plagiarism from the Judaic and the Christian creeds; but it did not rise so high as to conceive of any truth that needed or that admitted intellectual development, or that was susceptible of exposition and argument. However, if we will have it that the Caliph preached, then did his lieutenant say *Amen*. If Omar was a parson, then certainly Caled was his clerk.

NOTE 4. Page 145.

Paterculus, it must be remembered, was composing a peculiar form of history, and, therefore, under a peculiar law of composition. It was designed for a rapid survey of many ages, within a very narrow compass, and unavoidably pitched its scale of abstraction very high. This justified a rhetorical, almost a poetic, form of expression; for in such a mode of writing, whether a writer seeks that effect or not, the abrupt and almost lyrical transitions, the startling leaps over vast gulfs of time and action, already have the effect of impassioned composition. Hence, by an instinct, he becomes rhetorical: and the natural character of his rhetoric, its pointed condensation, often makes him obscure at first sight. We therefore, for

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the merely English reader have a little expanded or at least brought out his meaning. But for the Latin reader, who will enjoy his elliptical energy, we have sometimes added the original words.

NOTE 5. Page 153.

'*The Roman aid-de-camp's.*' — Excuse, reader, this modern phrase: by what other is it possible to express the relation to Tiberius, and the military office about his person, which Paterculus held on the German frontier? In the 104th chapter of his second book he says — '*Hoc tempus me, functum ante tribunatu castrorum, Tib. Cæsaris militem fecit;*' which in our version is — 'This epoch placed me, who had previously discharged the duties of camp-marshal, upon the staff of Cæsar.' And he goes on to say, that, having been made a brigadier-general of cavalry (*alæ præfectus*) under a commission which dated from the very day of Cæsar's adoption into the Imperial house and the prospect of succession, so that the two acts of grace ran concurrently — thenceforwards 'per annos continuous IX. præfectus aut legatus, spectator, et pro captu mediocritatis mea, adjutor fui' — or, as we beg to translate 'through a period of nine consecutive years from this date, I acted either as military lieutenant to Cæsar, or as ministerial secretary,' [such we hold to be the true virtual equivalent of *præfectus* — *i. e.* speaking fully of *præfectus prætorio*,] 'acting simultaneously as inspector of the public works,' [bridges and vast fortifications on the north-east German frontier,] 'and (to the best capacity of my slender faculties) as his personal aid-de-camp.' Possibly the reader may choose to give a less confined or professional meaning to the word *adjutor*. But, in apology, we must suggest two cautions to him: 1st, That elsewhere, Paterculus does certainly apply the term as a military designation, bearing a known technical meaning; and, 2d, That this word *adjutor*, in other non-military uses, as for instance on the stage, had none *but* a technical meaning.

NOTE 6. Page 154.

This is too much to allow for a generation in those days, when the average duration of life was much less than at present; but, as an exceedingly convenient allowance (*since*

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thrice 33½ *is just equal to a century*), it may be allowedly used in all cases not directly bearing on technical questions of civil economy. Meantime, as we love to suppose ourselves in all cases as speaking *virginibus puerisque*, who, though reading no man's paper throughout, may yet often read a page or a paragraph of every man's — we, for the chance of catching their eye in a case where they may really gain in two minutes an ineradicable conspectus of the Greek literature, (and for the sake of ignorant people universally, whose interests we hold sacred,) add a brief explanation of what is meant by *a generation*. Is it meant or imagined — that, in so narrow a compass as 33 years + 4 months the whole population of a city, or a people, could have died off? By no means: not under the lowest value of human life. What is meant is — that a number *equal* to the whole population will have died: not X, the actual population, but a number equal to X. Suppose the population of Paris 900,000. Then, in the time allowed for one generation, 900,000 will have died: but then, to make up that number, there will be 800,000 furnished, not by the people now existing, but by the people who *will be born* in the course of the thirty-three years. And thus the balloting for death falls only upon two out of three, whom at first sight it appears to hit. It falls not exclusively upon X, but upon X+Y: this latter quality Y being a quantity flowing concurrently with the lapse of the generation. Obvious as this explanation is, and almost childish, to every man who has even a tincture of political arithmetic, it is so far from being generally obvious — that, out of every thousand who will be interested in learning the earliest revolutions of literature, there will not be as many as seven who will know, even conjecturally, what is meant by a generation. Besides infinite other blunders and equivocations, many use an *age* and *a generation* as synonymous, whilst by *siecle* the French *uniformly* mean a *century*.

NOTE 7. Page 157.

The oddest feature in so odd a business was — that Augustus committed this castigation of bad poets to the police. But whence the police were to draw the skill for distinguishing between good poets and bad, is not explained. The poets

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must have found their weak minds somewhat astonished by the sentences of these reviewers — sitting like our Justices in Quarter Sessions — and deciding, perhaps, very much in the same terms; treating an Ode, if it were too martial, as a breach of the peace; directing an epic poet to find security for his good behavior during the next two years; and for the writers of Epithalamia on imperial marriages, ordering them 'to be privately whipped and discharged.' The whole affair is the more singular as coming from one who carried his *civilitas*, or show of popular manners, even to affectation. Power without the invidious exterior of power was the object of his life. Ovid seems to have noticed his inconsistency in this instance by reminding him, that even Jupiter did not disdain to furnish a te me *laudibus ipso jure*.

NOTE 8. Page 158.

'*Phidias:*' that he was as much of a creative power as the rest of his great contemporaries, that he did not merely take up or pursue a career already opened by others, is pretty clear from the state of Athens, and of the forty marble quarries which he began to lay under contribution. The quarries were previously unopened; the city was without architectural splendor.

NOTE 9. Page 161.

'Officers and *savans*.' — Ctesias held the latter character, Xenophon united both, in the earlier expedition. These were friends of Isocrates. In the latter expedition, the difficulty would have been to find the man, whether officer or *savant*, who was *not* the friend of Isocrates. Old age, such as his, was a very rare thing in Greece — a fact which is evident from the Greek work surviving on the subject of Macrobiotics: few cases occur beyond seventy. This accident, therefore, of length in Isocrates, must have made him already one of the standing lions in Athens for the last twenty-six years of his life; while, for the last seventy, his professorship of rhetoric must have brought him into connection with every great family in Greece. One thing puzzles us, what he did with his money, for he must have made a great deal. He had two prices; but he charged

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high to those who could afford it; and why not? people are not to learn Greek for nothing. Yet, being a teetotaller and a coward, how could he spend his money? That question is vexatious. However, this one possibility in the long man's life will forever make him interesting; he might, and it is even *probable* that he might, have seen Xenophon *dis*mount from some horse which he had stolen at Trebisond on his return from the Persian expedition; and he might have seen Alexander mount for Chæronea. Alexander was present at that battle, and personally joined in a charge of cavalry. It is not impossible that he may have ridden Bucephalus.

NOTE 10. Page 162.

'*Is exalted.*' – The logic of Gibbon may seem defective. Why should it exalt our sense of human dignity — that Isocrates was the youthful companion of Plato or Euripides, and the aged companion of Demosthenes? It ought, therefore, to be mentioned, that, in the sentence preceding, he had spoken of Athens as a city that 'condensed, within the period of a single life, the genius of ages and millions.' The condensation is the measure of the dignity; and Isocrates, as the 'single life' alluded to, is the measure of the condensation. That is the logic. By the way, Gibbon ought always to be cited by the *chapter* — the page and volume of course evanesce with many forms of publication, whilst the chapter is *always* available; and, in the commonest form of twelve volumes, becomes useful in a second function, as a guide to the particular volume; for six chapters, with hardly any exception, (*if* any,) are thrown into each volume. Consequently, the 40th chapter, standing in the seventh series of sixes, indicates the seventh volume.

NOTE 11. Page 163.

Excepting fragmentary writers, and the contributors from various ages to the Greek Anthologies, (which, however, next after the scenic literature, offer the most interesting expressions of Greek household feeling,) we are not aware of having omitted in this rapid review any one name that could be fancied to be a weighty name, excepting that of Lycophron. Of him we will

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say a word or two: — The work, by which he is known, is a monologue or dramatic scene from the mouth of one single speaker; this speaker is Cassandra, the prophetic daughter of Priam. In about one thousand five hundred Iambic lines (the ordinary length of a Greek tragedy), she pours forth a dark prophecy with respect to all the heroes engaged in the Trojan war, typifying their various unhappy catastrophes by symbolical images, which would naturally be intelligible enough to us who know their several histories, but which (from the particular selection of accidents or circumstances used for the designation of the persons) read like riddles without the aid of a commentator. This prophetic gloom, and the impassioned character of the many woes arising notoriously to the conquerors as well as the conquered in the sequel of the memorable war, give a coloring of dark power to the Cassandra of Lycophron. Else we confess to the fact of not having examined the poem attentively. We read it in the year 1809, having been told that it was the most difficult book in the Greek language. This is the popular impression, but a very false one. It is not difficult at all as respects the language (allowing for a few peculiar Lycophrontic words): the difficulty lies in the allusions, which are *intentionally* obscure.

Note 12. Page 166.

'*Not easily met with.*' — From Germany we have seen reprints of some eight or nine; but once only, so far as our bibliography extends, were the whole body published collectively. This was at the Aldine press in Venice, more than three centuries ago. Such an interval, and so solitary a publication, sufficiently explain the non-familiarity of modern scholars with this section of Greek literature.

Note 13. Page 175.

People will here remind us that Aristotle was half a foreigner, being born at Stagyra in Macedon. Ay, but amongst Athenian emigrants, and of an Athenian father. His mother, we think, was Thracian. The crossing of races almost uniformly terminates in producing splendor, at any rate energy, of intellect. If the roll of great men, or at least of energetic men, in Christendom,

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were carefully examined, it would astonish us to observe how many have been the children of mixed marriages ; *i. e.* of alliances between two bloods as to nation, although the races might originally have been the same.

Note 14. Page 176.

It is well to give unity to our grandest remembrances, by connecting them, as many as can be, with the same centre. Pericles died in the year 429 B. C. Supposing his age to be fifty-six, he would then be born about 485 B. C., that is, five years after the first Persian invasion under Darius, five years before the second under Xerxes.

Note 15. Page 200.

With respect to the word 'demagogues,' as a technical designation for the political orators and partisans at Athens, (otherwise called *οἱ προστατα*ι, those who headed any movement,) it is singular that so accurate a Greek scholar as Henry Stephens should have supposed *linguas promptas ad plebem concitandum* (an expression of Livy's) *potius των δημαγωγων fuisse quàm των ῥητορων* ; as if the demagogues were a separate class from the popular orators. But, says Valckenaer, the relation is soon stated : Not all the Athenian orators were demagogues ; but all the demagogues were in fact, and technically were called, the Orators.

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RHETORIC.*

[1828.]

No art, cultivated by man, has suffered more in the revolutions of taste and opinion than the art of rhetoric. There was a time when, by an undue extension of this term, it designated the whole cycle of accomplishments which prepared a man for public affairs. From that height it has descended to a level with the arts of alchemy and astrology, as holding out promises which consist in a mixed degree of impostures and of trifles. If we look into the prevailing theory of rhetoric, under which it meets with so degrading an estimate, we shall find that it fluctuates between two different conceptions, according to one of which it is an art of ostentatious ornament, and according to the other an art of sophistry. A man is held to play the rhetorician, when he treats a subject with more than usual gayety of ornament; and perhaps we may add, as an essential element in the idea, with *conscious* ornament. This is one view of rhetoric; and, under this, what it accomplishes is not so much to persuade as to delight; not so much to win the assent, as to stimulate the attention, and captivate the taste. And

* Whately's Elements of Rhetoric.

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even this purpose is attached to something separable and accidental in the *manner*.

But the other idea of rhetoric lays its foundation in something essential to the *matter*. This is that rhetoric of which Milton spoke, as able 'to dash maturest counsels, and to make the worse appear the better reason.' Now it is clear, that *argument* of some quality or other must be taken as the principle of this rhetoric; for those must be immature counsels indeed that could be dashed by mere embellishments of manner, or by artifices of diction and arrangement.

Here then we have in popular use two separate ideas of rhetoric, one of which is occupied with the general end of the fine arts; that is to say, intellectual pleasure. The other applies itself more specifically to a definite purpose of utility.

Such is the popular idea of rhetoric, which wants both unity and precision. If we seek these from the formal teachers of rhetoric, our embarrassment is not much relieved. All of them agree that rhetoric may be defined *the art of persuasion*. But if we inquire what *is* persuasion, we find them vague and indefinite, or even contradictory. To waive a thousand of others, Dr. Whately, in the work before us, insists upon the *conviction* of the understanding as 'an essential part of persuasion;' and, on the other hand, the author of the Philosophy of Rhetoric is equally satisfied that there is no persuasion without an appeal to the *passions*. Here are two views. We, for our parts, have a third, which excludes both: where conviction begins, the field of rhetoric ends — that is our opinion: and, as to the passions, we contend that they are not within the province of rhetoric, but of eloquence.

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In this view of rhetoric and its functions we coincide with Aristotle; as indeed originally we took it up on a suggestion derived from him. But as all parties may possibly fancy a confirmation of their views in Aristotle, we shall say a word or two in support of our own interpretation of that author, which will surprise our Oxford friends. Our explanation involves a very remarkable detection, which will tax many thousands of books with error in a particular point supposed to be as well established as the hills. We question, indeed, whether a Congreve rocket, or a bomb, descending upon the schools of Oxford, would cause more consternation than the explosion of that novelty which we are going to discharge.

Many years ago, when studying the Aristotelian rhetoric at Oxford, it struck us that, by whatever name Aristotle might describe the main purpose of rhetoric, practically, at least, in his own treatment of it, he threw the whole stress upon finding such arguments for any given thesis as, without positively proving or disproving it, gave it a colorable support. We could not persuade ourselves that it was by accident that the topics, or general heads of argument, were never in an absolute and unconditional sense true — but contained so much of plausible or colorable truth as is expressed in the original meaning of the word *probable*. A *ratio probabilis*, in the Latin use of the word *probabilis*, is that ground of assent — not which the understanding can solemnly approve and abide by — but the very opposite to this; one which it can submit to for a moment, and countenance as within the limits of the plausible.[1] That this was the real governing law of Aristotle's procedure, it was not

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possible to doubt: but was it consciously known to himself? If so, how was it to be reconciled with his own formal account of the office of rhetoric, so often repeated, that it consisted in finding enthymemes? What then was an enthymeme?

Oxford! thou wilt think us mad to ask. Certainly we knew, what all the world knows, that an enthymeme was understood to be a syllogism of which one proposition is suppressed — major, minor, or conclusion. But what possible relation had *that* to rhetoric? Nature sufficiently prompts all men to that sort of ellipsis; and what impertinence in a teacher to build his whole system upon a solemn precept to do this or that, when the rack would not have forced any man to do otherwise! Besides, Aristotle had represented it as the fault of former systems, that they applied themselves exclusively to the treatment of the passions — an object foreign to the purpose of the rhetorician, who, in some situations, is absolutely forbidden by law to use any such arts: whereas, says he, his true and universal weapon is the enthymeme, which is open to him everywhere. Now what opposition, or what relation of any kind, can be imagined between the system which he rejects and the one he adopts, if the enthymeme is to be understood as it usually has been? The rhetorician is not to address the passions, but — what? to mind that, in all his arguments, he suppresses one of his propositions! And these follies are put into the mouth of Aristotle.

In this perplexity a learned Scottish friend communicated to us an Essay of Facciolati's, read publicly about a century ago, (Nov. 1724,) and entitled *De Enthymemate*,[2] in which he maintains, that the re-

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ceived idea of the enthymeme is a total blunder, and triumphantly restores the lost idea. 'Nego,' says he, 'nego enthymema esse syllogismum mutilum, ut vulgo dialectici docent. Nego, inquam, et pernego enthymema enunciatione unâ et conclusione constare, quamvis ita in scholis omnibus finiatur, et a nobis ipsis finitum sit aliquando —— nolentibus extra locum lites suscipere.' *I deny peremptorily that an enthymeme consists of one premiss and the conclusion: although that doctrine has been laid down universally in the schools, and upon one occasion even by myself, as unwilling to move the question unseasonably.*

Facciolati is not the least accurate of logicians, because he happens to be the most elegant. Yet, we apprehend, that at such innovations, Smigleciùs will stir in his grave; Keckermannus will groan; 'Dutch Burgersdyk' will snort; and English Crackenthorpius, (who has the honor to be an ancestor of Mr. Wordsworth's,) though buried for two centuries, will revisit the glimpses of the moon. And really, if the question were for a name, Heaven forbid that we should disturb the peace of logicians: they might have leave to say, as of the Strid in Wharfdale,

> 'It has borne that name a thousand years,
> And shall a thousand more.'

But, whilst the name is abused, the idea perishes. Facciolati undoubtedly is right: nor is he the first who has observed the error. Julius Pacius, who understood Aristotle better than any man that ever lived, had long before remarked it. The arguments of Facciolati we shall give below;[3] it will be sufficient here to state the result. An enthymeme differs

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from a syllogism, not in the accident of suppressing one of its propositions; either may do this, or neither; the difference is essential, and in the nature of the *matter*; that of the syllogism being certain and apodeictic; that of the enthymeme probable, and drawn from the province of opinion.

This theory tallies exactly with our own previous construction of Aristotle's rhetoric, and explains the stress which he had laid at the outset upon enthymemes. Whatsoever is certain, or matter of fixed science, can be no subject for the rhetorician: where it is possible for the understanding to be convinced, no field is open for rhetorical persuasion. Absolute certainty, and fixed science, transcend and exclude opinion and probability. The province of rhetoric, whether meant for an influence upon the actions, or simply upon the belief, lies amongst that vast field of cases where there is a *pro* and a *con*, with the chance of right and wrong, true and false, distributed in varying proportions between them. There is also an immense range of truths, where there are no chances at all concerned, but the affirmative and the negative are both true; as, for example, the goodness of human nature and its wickedness; the happiness of human life and its misery; the charms of knowledge, and its hollowness; the fragility of human prosperity, in the eye of religious meditation, and its security, as estimated by worldly confidence and youthful hope. In all these cases the rhetorician exhibits his art by giving an impulse to one side, and by withdrawing the mind so steadily from all thoughts or images which support the other, as to leave it practically under the possession of this partial estimate.

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Upon this theory, what relation to rhetoric shall we assign to style and the ornamental arts of composition? In some respect they seem liable to the same objection as that which Aristotle has urged against appeals to the passions; both are extra-essential, or ἐξω τυ πραγματος; they are subjective arts, not objective; that is, they do not affect the thing which is to be surveyed, but the eye of him who is to survey. Yet, in a feast, the epicure holds himself not more obliged to the cook for the venison, than to the physician who braces his stomach to enjoy. And any arts, which conciliate regard to the speaker, indirectly promote the effect of his arguments. On this account, and because (under the severest limitation of rhetoric) they are in many cases indispensable to the perfect interpretation of the thoughts; we may admit arts of style and ornamental composition as the ministerial part of rhetoric. But, with regard to the passions, as contended for by Dr. Campbell, — it is a sufficient answer, that they are already preoccupied by what is called *Eloquence*.

Mr. Coleridge, as we have often heard, is in the habit of drawing the line with much philosophical beauty between rhetoric and eloquence. On this topic we were never so fortunate as to hear him: but if we are here called upon for a distinction, we shall satisfy our immediate purpose by a very plain and brief one. By Eloquence, we understand the overflow of powerful feelings upon occasions fitted to excite them. But Rhetoric is the art of aggrandizing and bringing out into strong relief, by means of various and striking thoughts, some aspect of truth which of itself is supported by no spontaneous feelings, and therefore rests upon artificial aids.

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Greece, as may well be imagined, was the birthplace of Rhetoric; to which of the Fine Arts was it not? and here, in one sense of the word Rhetoric, the art had its consummation: for the theory, or *ars docens*, was taught with a fulness and an accuracy by the Grecian masters, not afterwards approached. In particular, it was so taught by Aristotle, whose system, we are disposed to agree with Dr. Whately, in pronouncing the best, as regards the primary purpose of a teacher; though otherwise, for elegance, and as a practical model in the art he was expounding, neither Aristotle, nor any less austere among the Greek rhetoricians, has any pretensions to measure himself with Quintilian. In reality, for a triumph over the difficulties of the subject, and as a lesson on the possibility of imparting grace to the treatment of scholastic topics, naturally as intractable as that of Grammar or Prosody, there is no such *chef-d'œuvre* to this hour in any literature, as the Institutions of Quintilian. Laying this one case out of the comparison, however, the Greek superiority was indisputable.

Yet how is it to be explained, that with these advantages on the side of the Greek rhetoric as an *ars docens*, rhetoric as a practical art (the *ars utens*) never made any advances amongst the Greeks to the brilliancy which it attained in Rome? Up to a certain period, and throughout the palmy state of the Greek republics, we may account for it thus: Rhetoric, in its finest and most absolute burnish, may be called an *eloquentia umbratica;* that is, it aims at an elaborate form of beauty, which shrinks from the strife of business, and could neither arise nor make itself felt in a tumultuous assembly. Certain features,

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it is well known, and peculiar styles of countenance, which are impressive in a drawing-room, become ineffective on a public stage. The fine tooling, and delicate tracery, of the cabinet artist is lost upon a building of colossal proportions. Extemporaneousness, again, a favorable circumstance to impassioned eloquence, is death to Rhetoric. Two characteristics indeed there were, of a Greek popular assembly, which must have operated fatally on the rhetorician — its fervor, in the first place, and, secondly, the coarseness of a real interest. All great rhetoricians, in selecting their subject, have shunned the determinate cases of real life: and even in the single instance of a deviation from the rule — that of the author (whoever he be) of the Declamations attributed to Quintilian, the cases are shaped with so romantic a generality, and so slightly circumstantiated, as to allow him all the benefit of pure abstractions.

We can readily understand, therefore, why the fervid oratory of the Athenian Assemblies, and the intense reality of its interest, should stifle the growth of Rhetoric: the smoke, tarnish, and demoniac glare of Vesuvius easily eclipse the pallid coruscations of the Aurora Borealis. And in fact, amongst the greater orators of Greece, there is not a solitary gleam of rhetoric: Isocrates may have a little, being (to say the truth) neither orator nor rhetorician in any eminent sense; Demosthenes has none. But when those great thunders had subsided, which reached 'to Macedon, and Artaxerxes' throne,' when the 'fierce democracy' itself had perished, and Greece had fallen under the common circumstances of the Roman Empire, how came it that Greek rhetoric did not blossom

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concurrently with Roman? Vegetate it did: and a rank crop of weeds grew up under the name of Rhetoric, down to the times of the Emperor Julian and his friend Libanius, (both of whom, by the way, were as worthless writers as have ever abused the Greek language.) But this part of Greek literature is a desert with no oasis. The fact is, if it were required to assign the two bodies of writers who have exhibited the human understanding in the most abject poverty, and whose works by no possibility emit a casual scintillation of wit, fancy, just thinking, or good writing, we should certainly fix upon Greek rhetoricians, and Italian critics. Amongst the whole mass there is not a page, that any judicious friend to literature would wish to reprieve from destruction. And in both cases we apprehend that the possibility of so much inanity is due in part to the quality of the two languages. The diffuseness and loose structure of Greek style unfit it for the closeness, condensation, and το αγχιστροφον of rhetoric; the melodious beauty of the mere sounds, which both in the Italian and in the Greek are combined with much majesty, dwells upon the ear so delightfully, that in no other language is it so easy as in these two to write with little or no meaning, and to flow along through a whole wilderness of inanity, without particularly rousing the reader's disgust.

In the literature of Rome it is that we find the true El Dorado of rhetoric, as we might expect from the sinewy compactness of the language. Livy, and, above all preceding writers, Ovid, display the greatest powers of rhetoric in forms of composition, which were not particularly adapted to favor that talent.

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The contest of Ajax and Ulysses, for the arms of Achilles, in one of the latter Books of the Metamorphoses, is a *chef-d'œuvre* of rhetoric, considering its metrical form; for metre, and especially the flowing heroic hexameter, is no advantage to the rhetorician.[4] The two Plinys, Lucan, (though again under the disadvantage of verse,) Petronius Arbiter, and Quintilian, but above all, the Senecas, (for a Spanish cross appears to improve the quality of the rhetorician,) have left a body of rhetorical composition such as no modern nation has rivalled. Even the most brilliant of these writers, however, were occasionally surpassed, in particular *bravuras* of rhetoric, by several of the Latin Fathers, particularly Tertullian, Arnobius, St. Austin, and a writer whose name we cannot at this moment recall. In fact, a little African blood operated as genially in this respect as Spanish, whilst an Asiatic cross was inevitably fatal. Partly from this cause, and partly because they wrote in an unfavorable language, the Greek Fathers are, one and all, mere Birmingham rhetoricians. Even Gregory Nazianzen is so, with submission to Messieurs of the Port Royal, and other bigoted critics, who have pronounced him at the very top of the tree among the fine writers of antiquity. Undoubtedly, he has a turgid style of mouthy grandiloquence, (though often the merest bombast): but for keen and polished rhetoric he is singularly unfitted, by inflated habits of thinking, by loitering diffuseness, and a dreadful trick of calling names. The spirit of personal invective is peculiarly adverse to the coolness of rhetoric. As to Chrysostom, and Basil, with less of pomp and swagger than Gregory, they have not at all more of rhetorical

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burnish and compression. Upon the whole, looking back through the dazzling files of the ancient rhetoricians, we are disposed to rank the Senecas and Tertullian as the leaders of the band: for St. Austin, in his Confessions, and wherever he becomes peculiarly interesting, is apt to be impassioned and fervent in a degree which makes him break out of the proper pace of rhetoric. He is matched to trot, and is continually breaking into a gallop. Indeed, his Confessions have in parts, particularly in those which relate to the death of his young friend, and his own frenzy of grief, all that real passion which is only imagined in the Confessions of Rousseau, under a preconception derived from his known character and unhappy life. By the time of the Emperor Justinian, or in the century between that time and the era of Mahomet, (A. D. 620,) which century we regard as the common *crepusculum*, between ancient and modern history, all rhetoric, of every degree and quality, seems to have finally expired.

In the literature of modern Europe, rhetoric has been cultivated with success. But this remark applies only with any force to a period which is now long past; and it is probable, upon various considerations, that such another period will never revolve. The rhetorician's art, in its glory and power, has silently faded away before the stern tendencies of the age; and if, by any peculiarity of taste, or strong determination of the intellect, a rhetorician, *en grand costume*, were again to appear amongst us, it is certain that he would have no better welcome than a stare of surprise as a posture-maker or balancer, not more elevated in the general estimate, but far less amusing, than the

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opera-dancer or equestrian gymnast. No — the age of Rhetoric, like that of Chivalry, is gone, and passed amongst forgotten things; and the rhetorician can have no more chance for returning, than the rhapsodist of early Greece, or the Troubadour of romance. So multiplied are the modes of intellectual enjoyment in modern times, that the choice is absolutely distracted; and in a boundless theatre of pleasures, to be had at little or no cost of intellectual activity, it would be marvellous, indeed, if any considerable audience could be found for an exhibition which presupposes a state of tense exertion on the part both of auditor and performer. To hang upon one's own thoughts as an object of conscious interest, to play with them, to watch and pursue them through a maze of inversions, evolutions, and harlequin changes, implies a condition of society either like that in the monastic ages, forced to introvert its energies from mere defect of books; (whence arose the scholastic metaphysics, admirable for its subtlety, but famishing the mind, whilst it sharpened its edge in one exclusive direction;) or, if it implies no absolute starvation of intellect, as in the case of the Roman rhetoric, which arose upon a considerable (though not very various) literature, it proclaims at least a quiescent state of the public mind, unoccupied with daily novelties, and at leisure from the agitations of eternal change.

Growing out of the same condition of society, there is another cause at work which will forever prevent the resurrection of rhetoric, viz. — the necessities of public business, its vast extent, complexity, fulness of detail, and consequent vulgarity, as compared with that of the ancients. The very same cause, by the

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way, furnishes an answer to the question moved by Hume, in one of his Essays, with regard to the declension of eloquence in our deliberative assemblies. Eloquence, senatorial and forensic, at least, has languished under the same changes of society which have proved fatal to rhetoric. The political economy of the ancient republics, and their commerce, were simple and unelaborate — the system of their public services, both martial and civil, was arranged on the most naked and manageable principles; for we must not confound the perplexity in our modern explanations of these things, with a perplexity in the things themselves. The foundation of these differences was in the differences of domestic life. Personal wants being few, both from climate and from habit, and, in the great majority of the citizens, limited almost to the pure necessities of nature; hence arose, for the mass of the population, the possibility of surrendering themselves, much more than with us, either to the one paramount business of the state — war, or to a state of Indian idleness. Rome, in particular, during the ages of her growing luxury, must be regarded as a nation supported by other nations, by largesses, in effect, that is to say, by the plunder of conquest. Living, therefore, upon foreign alms, or upon corn purchased by the product of tribute or of spoils, a nation could readily dispense with that expansive development of her internal resources, upon which modern Europe has been forced by the more equal distribution of power amongst the civilized world.

The changes which have followed in the functions of our popular assemblies, correspond to the great

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revolution here described. Suppose yourself an ancient Athenian, at some customary display of Athenian oratory, what will be the topics? Peace or war, vengeance for public wrongs, or mercy to prostrate submission, national honor and national gratitude, glory and shame, and every aspect of open appeal to the primal sensibilities of man. On the other hand, enter an English Parliament, having the most of a popular character in its constitution and practice, that is anywhere to be found in the Europe of this day; and the subject of debate will probably be a road-bill, a bill for enabling a coal-gas company to assume certain privileges against a competitor in oil-gas; a bill for defranchising a corrupt borough, or perhaps some technical point of form in the Exchequer bills' bill. So much is the face of public business vulgarized by details. The same spirit of differences extends to forensic eloquence. Grecian and Roman pleadings are occupied with questions of elementary justice, large and diffusive, apprehensible even to the uninstructed, and connecting themselves at every step with powerful and tempestuous feelings. In British trials, on the contrary, the field is foreclosed against any interest of so elevating a nature, because the rights and wrongs of the case are almost inevitably absorbed to an unlearned eye by the technicalities of the law, or by the intricacy of the facts.

But this is not always the case — doubtless not; subjects for eloquence, and, therefore, eloquence, will sometimes arise in our senate, and our courts of justice. And in one respect our British displays are more advantageously circumstanced than the ancient, being more conspicuously brought forward into effect by their contrast to the ordinary course of business.

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'Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
Since seldom coming, in the long years set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain jewels in the carcanet.' *

But still the objection of Hume remains unimpeached as to the fact, that eloquence is a rarer growth of modern than of ancient civil polity, even in those countries which have the advantage of free institutions. The letter of this objection is sustained, but substantially it is disarmed, so far as its purpose was to argue any declension on the part of Christian nations, by this explanation of ours, which traces the impoverished condition of civil eloquence to the complexity of public business.

But eloquence in one form or other is immortal, and will never perish so long as there are human hearts moving under the agitations of hope and fear, love and passionate hatred. And, in particular to us of the modern world, as an endless source of indemnification for what we have lost in the simplicity of our social systems, we have received a new dowry of eloquence, and *that* of the highest order, in the sanctities of our religion — a field unknown to antiquity — for the Pagan religions did not produce much poetry, and of oratory none at all.

On the other hand, that cause, which, operating upon eloquence, has but extinguished it under a single direction, to rhetoric has been unconditionally fatal. Eloquence is not banished from the public business of this country as useless, but as difficult, and as not spontaneously arising from topics such as generally

* Shakspeare, Sonnet 52.

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furnish the staple of debate. But rhetoric, if attempted on a formal scale, would be summarily exploded as pure foppery, and trifling with time. Falstaff, on the field of battle, presenting his bottle of sack for a pistol, or Polonius with his quibbles, could not appear a more unseasonable *plaisanteur* than a rhetorician alighting from the clouds upon a public assembly in Great Britain, met for the dispatch of business.

Under these malign aspects of the modern structure of society, a structure to which the whole world will be moulded as it becomes civilized, there can be no room for any revival of rhetoric in public speaking; and from the same and other causes, acting upon the standard of public taste, quite as little room in written composition. In spite, however, of the tendencies to this consummation, which have been long maturing, it is a fact, that, next after Rome, England is the country in which rhetoric prospered most — at a time when science was unborn as a popular interest, and the commercial activities of after-times were yet sleeping in their rudiments. This was in the period from the latter end of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century; and, though the English rhetoric was less true to its own ideal than the Roman, and often modulated into a higher key of impassioned eloquence, yet, unquestionably, in some of its qualities, it remains a monument of the very finest rhetorical powers.

Omitting Sir Philip Sidney, and omitting his friend, Lord Brooke, (in whose prose there are some bursts of pathetic eloquence, as there is of rhetoric in his verse, though too often harsh and affectedly obscure,)

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the first very eminent rhetorician in the English literature is Donne. Dr. Johnson inconsiderately classes him in company with Cowley, &c., under the title of *Metaphysical* Poets; but *Rhetorical* would have been a more accurate designation. In saying *that*, however, we must remind our readers, that we revert to the original use of the word *Rhetoric*, as laying the principal stress upon the management of the thoughts, and only a secondary one upon the ornaments of style. Few writers have shown a more extraordinary compass of power than Donne; for he combined what no other man has ever done — the last sublimation of dialectical subtlety and address with the most impassioned majesty. Massy diamonds compose the very substance of his poem on the Metempsychosis, thoughts and descriptions which have the fervent and gloomy sublimity of Ezekiel or Æschylus, whilst a diamond dust of rhetorical brilliances is strewed over the whole of his occasional verses and prose. No criticism was ever more unhappy than that of Dr. Johnson's, which denounces all this artificial display as so much perversion of taste. There cannot be a falser thought than this; for, upon that principle, a whole class of compositions might be vicious, by conforming to its own ideal. The artifice and machinery of rhetoric furnishes in its degree as legitimate a basis for intellectual pleasure as any other; that the pleasure is of an inferior order, can no more attaint the idea or model of the composition, than it can impeach the excellence of an epigram that it is not a tragedy. Every species of composition is to be tried by its own laws; and if Dr. Johnson had urged explicitly, (what was evidently moving in his thoughts,) that a metrical

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structure, by holding forth the promise of poetry, defrauds the mind of its just expectations, — he would have said what is notoriously false. Metre is open to any form of composition, provided it will aid the expression of the thoughts; and the only sound objection to it is, that it has *not* done so. Weak criticism, indeed, is that which condemns a copy of verses under the ideal of poetry, when the mere substitution of another name and classification suffices to evade the sentence, and to reinstate the composition in its rights as rhetoric. It may be very true that the age of Donne gave too much encouragement to his particular vein of composition; that, however, argues no depravity of taste, but a taste erring only in being too limited and exclusive.

The next writers of distinction, who came forward as rhetoricians, were Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and Milton in many of his prose works. They labor under opposite defects: Burton is too quaint, fantastic, and disjointed. Milton too slow, solemn, and continuous. In the one we see the flutter of a parachute; in the other the stately and voluminous gyrations of an ascending balloon. Agile movement, and a certain degree of fancifulness, are indispensable to rhetoric. But Burton is not so much fanciful as capricious; his motion is not the motion of freedom, but of lawlessness: he does not dance, but caper. Milton, on the other hand, *polonaises* with a grand Castilian air, in paces too sequacious and processional; even in his passages of merriment, and when stung into a quicker motion by personal disdain for an unworthy antagonist, his thoughts and his imagery still appear to move to the music of the organ.

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In some measure it is a consequence of these peculiarities, and so far it is the more a duty to allow for them, that the rhetoric of Milton, though wanting in animation, is unusually superb in its coloring; its very monotony is derived from the sublime unity of the presiding impulse; and hence, it sometimes ascends into eloquence of the highest kind, and sometimes even into the raptures of lyric poetry. The main thing, indeed, wanting to Milton, was to have fallen upon happier subjects: for, with the exception of the 'Areopagitica,' there is not one of his prose works upon a theme of universal interest, or perhaps fitted to be the groundwork of a rhetorical display.

But, as it has happened to Milton sometimes to give us poetry for rhetoric, in one instance he has unfortunately given us rhetoric for poetry: this occurs in the Paradise Lost, where the debates of the fallen angels are carried on by a degrading process of gladiatorial rhetoric. Nay, even the councils of God, though not debated to and fro, are, however, expounded rhetorically. This is astonishing; for no one was better aware than Milton* of the distinction between the *discursive* and *intuitive* acts of the mind, as apprehended by the old metaphysicians, and the incompatibility of the former with any but a limitary intellect. This indeed was familiar to all the writers of his day: but, as old Gifford has shown, by a most idle note upon a passage in Massinger, that it is a distinction which has now perished (except indeed in Germany), — we shall recall it to the reader's atten-

* See the fifth book of the Paradise Lost, and passages in his prose writings.

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tion. An *intuition* is any knowledge whatsoever, sensuous or intellectual, which is apprehended *immediately:* a notion on the other hand, or product of the discursive faculty, is any knowledge whatsoever which is apprehended *mediately*. All reasoning is carried on discursively; that is, *discurrendo*, — by running about to the right and the left, laying the separate notices together, and thence mediately deriving some third apprehension. Now this process, however glorious a characteristic of the human mind as distinguishing it from the brute, is degrading to any supra-human intelligence, divine or angelic, by arguing limitation. God must not proceed by steps, and the fragmentary knowledge of accretion; in which case, at starting he has all the intermediate notices as so many bars between himself and the conclusion; and even at the penultimate or antepenultimate act, he is still short of the truth. God must *see*, he must *intuit*, so to speak; and all truth must reach him simultaneously, first and last, without succession of time, or partition of acts; just as light, before that theory had been refuted by the Satellites of Jupiter, was held not to be propagated in time, but to be here and there at one and the same indivisible instant. Paley, from mere rudeness of metaphysical skill, has talked of the *judgment* and the *judiciousness* of God: but this is profaneness, and a language unworthily applied even to an angelic being. To judge, that is, to subsume one proposition under another, — to be judicious, that is, to collate the means with the end, are acts impossible in the divine nature, and not to be ascribed, even under the license of a figure, to any being which transcends the limitations of humanity. Many other instances there

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are in which Milton is taxed with having too grossly sensualized his supernatural agents; some of which, however, the necessities of the action may excuse; and at the worst they are readily submitted to as having an intelligible purpose — that of bringing so mysterious a thing as a spiritual nature or agency within the limits of the representable. But the intellectual degradation fixed on his spiritual beings by the rhetorical debates, is purely gratuitous, neither resulting from the course of the action, nor at all promoting it. Making allowances, however, for the original error in the conception, it must be granted that the execution is in the best style: the mere logic of the debate, indeed, is not better managed than it would have been by the House of Commons. But the colors of style are grave and suitable to afflicted angels. In the *Paradise Regained*, this is still more conspicuously true: the oratory there, on the part of Satan in the Wilderness, is no longer of a rhetorical cast, but in the grandest style of impassioned eloquence that can be imagined as the fit expression for the movements of an angelic despair; and in particular the speech, on being first challenged by our Saviour, beginning,

'Tis true, I *am* that spirit unfortunate,'

is not excelled in sublimity by any passage in the poem.

Milton, however, was not destined to gather the *spolia opima* of English rhetoric: two contemporaries of his own, and whose literary course pretty nearly coincided with his own in point of time, surmounted all competition, and in that amphitheatre became the

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Protagonistæ. These were Jeremy Taylor and Sir Thomas Browne; who, if not absolutely the foremost in the accomplishments of art, were, undoubtedly, the richest, the most dazzling, and, with reference to their matter, the most captivating of all rhetoricians. In them first, and, perhaps, (if we except occasional passages in the German John Paul Richter,) in them only, are the two opposite forces of eloquent passion and rhetorical fancy brought into an exquisite equilibrium, approaching, receding — attracting, repelling — blending, separating — chasing and chased, as in a fugue, and again lost in a delightful interfusion, so as to create a middle species of composition, more various and stimulating to the understanding than pure eloquence, more gratifying to the affections than naked rhetoric. Under this one circumstance of coincidence, in other respects their minds were of the most opposite temperament: Sir Thomas Browne, deep, tranquil, and majestic as Milton, silently premeditating, and 'disclosing his golden couplets,' as under some genial instinct of incubation: Jeremy Taylor, restless, fervid, aspiring, scattering abroad a prodigality of life, not unfolding but creating, with the energy, and the 'myriad-mindedness,' of Shakspeare. Where, but in Sir T. B., shall one hope to find music so Miltonic, an intonation of such solemn chords as are struck in the following opening bar of a passage in the Urn-burial — 'Now, since these bones have rested quietly in the grave, under the drums and tramplings of three conquests'? &c. What a melodious ascent as of a prelude to some impassioned requiem breathing from the pomps of earth, and from the sanctities of the grave! What a *fluctus decuma-*

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nus of rhetoric! Time expounded, not by generations or centuries, but by the vast periods of conquests and dynasties; by cycles of Pharaohs and Ptolemies, Antiochi, and Arsacides! And these vast successions of time distinguished and figured by the uproars which revolve at their inaugurations — by the drums and tramplings rolling overhead upon the chambers of forgotten dead — the trepidations of time and mortality vexing, at secular intervals, the everlasting Sabbaths of the grave! Show us, oh pedant, such another strain from the oratory of Greece or Rome! For it is not an *Ὀυ μα τους ἐν Μαραθωνι τεθνηκοτας*, or any such bravura, that will make a fit antiphony to this sublime rapture. We will not, however, attempt a descant upon the merits of Sir T. Browne, after the admirable one by Mr. Coleridge: and as to Jeremy Taylor, we would as readily undertake to put a belt about the ocean as to characterize him adequately within the space at our command. It will please the reader better that he should characterize himself, however imperfectly, by a few specimens selected from some of his rarest works; a method which will, at the same time, have the collateral advantage of illustrating an important truth in reference to this florid or Corinthian order of rhetoric, which we shall have occasion to notice a little further on: —

'It was observed by a Spanish confessor, — that in persons not very religious, the confessions which they made upon their death-beds, were the coldest, the most imperfect, and with less contrition than all which he had observed them to make in many years before. For, so the canes of Egypt, when they newly arise

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from their bed of mud, and slime of Nilus, start up into an equal and continual length, and uninterrupted but with few knots, and are strong and beauteous, with great distances and intervals; but, when they are grown to their full length, they lessen into the point of a pyramid, and multiply their knots and joints, interrupting the fineness and smoothness of its body. So are the steps and declensions of him that does not grow in grace. At first, when he springs up from his impurity by the waters of baptism and repentance, he grows straight and strong, and suffers but few interruptions of piety; and his constant courses of religion are but rarely intermitted, till they ascend up to a full age, or towards the ends of their life: then they are weak, and their devotions often intermitted, and their breaks are frequent, and they seek excuses, and labor for dispensations, and love God and religion less and less, till their old age, instead of a crown of their virtue and perseverance, ends in levity and unprofitable courses, light and useless as the tufted feathers upon the cane, every wind can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make 't useful.'

'If we consider the price that the Son of God paid for the redemption of a soul, we shall better estimate of it, than from the weak discourses of our imperfect and unlearned philosophy. Not the spoil of rich provinces — not the estimate of kingdoms — not the price of Cleopatra's draught, — not anything that was corruptible or perishing; for that, which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution, could not be a price for the redemption of one perishing soul. When God *made* a soul, it was only *facia-*

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mus hominem ad imaginem nostram; he spake the word, and it was done. But, when man had lost his soul, which the spirit of God had breathed into him, it was not so soon *recovered*. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that he can return a man from dust and corruption. But for this resurrection of the soul, for the re-implacing of the Divine image, for the re-entitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, God did a greater work than the creation; He was fain to contract Divinity to a span; to send a person to die for us, who of himself could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make him capable of dying: He prepared a person instrumental to his purpose, by sending his Son from his own bosom, — a person both God and man, an enigma to all nations and to all sciences; one that ruled over all the angels, that walked on the pavements of heaven, whose feet were clothed with stars; whose understanding is larger than that infinite space which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first orb of heaven; a person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God. This was the only person that was designed in the eternal decrees, to pay the price of a soul — less than this person could not do it. Nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfy for a soul lost to infinite ages; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet, if it be possible that Infinite can receive degrees, this is but one-half of the abyss, and I think the lesser.'

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'It was a strange variety of natural efficacies, that manna should corrupt in twenty-four hours, if gathered upon Wednesday or Thursday, and that it should last till forty-eight hours, if gathered upon the even of the Sabbath; and that it should last many hundreds of years, when placed in the sanctuary by the ministry of the high-priest. But so it was in the Jews' religion; and manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites; and the same measure was a different proportion, it was much, and it was little; as if nature, that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is everywhere and nowhere, filling all things, and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one omer, and doing the work of two; like the crowns of kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty warrior, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant prince.'

'His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel: for all the world, in the abyss of the Divine mercies, is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is immeasurable: and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers: and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity.'

These passages are not cited with so vain a purpose as that of furnishing a sea-line for measuring the 'soundless deeps' of Jeremy Taylor, but to illustrate

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that one remarkable characteristic of his style — which we have already noticed — viz. the everlasting strife and fluctuation between his rhetoric and his eloquence, which maintain their alternations with a force and inevitable recurrence, like the systole and diastole — the contraction and expansion — of some living organ. For this characteristic he was indebted in mixed proportions to his own peculiar style of understanding, and the nature of his subject. Where the understanding is not active and teeming, but possessed by a few vast and powerful ideas, (which was the case of Milton,) there the funds of a varied rhetoric are wanting. On the other hand, where the understanding is all alive with the subtilty of distinctions, and nourished (as Jeremy Taylor's was) by casuistical divinity, the variety and opulence of the rhetoric is apt to be oppressive. But this tendency, in the case of Taylor, was happily checked and balanced by the commanding passion, intensity, and solemnity of his exalted theme, which gave a final unity to the tumultuous motions of his intellect. The only very obvious defects of Taylor were in the mechanical part of his art, in the mere *technique;* he writes like one who never revises, nor tries the effect upon his ear of his periods as musical wholes; and in the syntax and connection of the parts seems to have been habitually careless of slight blemishes.

Jeremy Taylor[5] died in a few years after the Restoration. Sir Thomas Browne, though at that time nearly thirty years removed from the first surreptitious edition of his *Religio Medici*, lingered a little longer. But, when both were gone, it may be truly affirmed that the great oracles of rhetoric were finally silenced.

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South and Barrow, indeed, were brilliant dialecticians in different styles; but, after Tillotson, with his meagre intellect, his low key of feeling, and the smug and scanty draperies of his style, had announced a new era, — English divinity ceased to be the racy vineyard that it had been in ages of ferment and struggle. Like the soil of Sicily, (*vide* Sir H. Davy's *Agricultural Chemistry*,) it was exhausted forever by the tilth and rank fertility of its golden youth.

Since then, great passions and high thinking have either disappeared from literature altogether, or thrown themselves into poetic forms which, with the privilege of a masquerade, are allowed to assume the spirit of past ages, and to speak in a key unknown to the general literature. At all events, no pulpit oratory of a rhetorical cast, for upwards of a century, has been able to support itself, when stripped of the aids of voice and action. Robert Hall and Edward Irving, when printed, exhibit only the spasms of weakness. Nor do we remember one memorable burst of rhetoric in the pulpit eloquence of the last one hundred and fifty years, with the exception of a fine oath ejaculated by a dissenting minister of Cambridge, who, when appealing for the confirmation of his words to the grandeur of man's nature, swore — By this and by the other, and at length, 'By the Iliad, by the Odyssey' — as the climax, in a long bead-roll of *speciosa miracula*, which he had apostrophized as monuments of human power. As to Foster, he has been prevented from preaching by a complaint affecting the throat; but, judging from the quality of his celebrated Essays, he could never have figured as a truly splendid rhetorician; for the imagery and orna-

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mental parts of his Essays have evidently not grown up in the loom, and concurrently with the texture of the thoughts, but have been separately added afterwards, as so much embroidery or fringe.

Politics, meantime, however, inferior in any shape to religion, as an ally of real eloquence, might yet either when barbed by an interest of intense personality, or on the very opposite footing of an interest comprehensively national, have irritated the growth of rhetoric such as the spirit of the times allowed. In one conspicuous instance it did so; but generally it had little effect, as a cursory glance over the two last centuries will show.

In the reign of James I. the House of Commons first became the theatre of struggles truly national. The relations of the people and the crown were then brought to issue; and under shifting names, continued *sub judice* from that time to 1688; and from that time, in fact, a corresponding interest was directed to the proceedings of Parliament. But it was not until 1642 that any free communication was made of what passed in debate. During the whole of the Civil War, the speeches of the leading members upon all great questions were freely published in occasional pamphlets. Naturally they were very much compressed; but enough survives to show that, from the agitations of the times, and the religious gravity of the House, no rhetoric was sought, or would have been tolerated. In the reign of Charles II., judging from such records as we have of the most critical debates, (that preserved by Locke, for instance, through the assistance of his patron Lord Shaftesbury,) the general tone and standard of Parliamentary eloquence had taken pretty

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nearly its present form and level. The religious gravity had then given way; and the pedantic tone, stiffness, and formality of punctual divisions, had been abandoned for the freedom of polite conversation. It was not, however, until the reign of Queen Anne that the qualities and style of parliamentary eloquence were submitted to public judgment; this was on occasion of the trial of Dr. Sacheverel, which was managed by members of the House of Commons. The Whigs, however, of that era had no distinguished speakers. On the Tory side, St. John (Lord Bolingbroke) was the most accomplished person in the house. His style may be easily collected from his writings, which have all the air of having been dictated without premeditation; and the effect of so much showy and fluent declamation, combined with the graces of his manner and person, may be inferred from the deep impression which they seem to have left upon Lord Chesterfield, himself so accomplished a judge, and so familiar with the highest efforts of the age of Mr. Pulteney and Lord Chatham. With two exceptions indeed, to be noticed presently, Lord Bolingbroke came the nearest of all Parliamentary orators who have been particularly recorded, to the ideal of a fine rhetorician. It was no disadvantage to him that he was shallow, being so luminous and transparent; and the splendor of his periodic diction, with his fine delivery, compensated his defect in imagery. Sir Robert Walpole was another Lord Londonderry; like him, an excellent statesman, and a first-rate leader of the House of Commons, but in other respects a plain, unpretending man; and, like Lord Londonderry, he had the reputation of a block-

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head with all eminent blockheads, and of a man of talents with those who were themselves truly such. 'When I was very young,' says, Burke, 'a general fashion told me I was to admire some of the writings against that minister; a little more maturity taught me as much to despise them.' Lord Mansfield, 'the fluent Murray,' was or would have been, but for the condensation of law, another Bolingbroke. 'How sweet an Ovid was in Murray lost!' says Pope; and, if the comparison were suggested with any studied propriety, it ascribes to Lord Mansfield the talents of a first-rate rhetorician. Lord Chatham had no rhetoric at all, any more than Charles Fox of the next generation: both were too fervent, too Demosthenic, and threw themselves too ardently upon the graces of nature. Mr. Pitt came nearer to the idea of a rhetorician, in so far as he seemed to have more artifice; but this was only in the sonorous rotundity of his periods, which were cast in a monotonous mould; for in other respects he would have been keenly alive to the ridicule of rhetoric in a First Lord of the Treasury.

All these persons, whatever might be their other differences, agreed in this — that they were no jugglers, but really *were* that which they appeared to be, and never struggled for distinctions which did not naturally belong to them. But next upon the roll comes forward an absolute *charlatan* — a *charlatan* the most acomplished that can ever have figured upon so intellectual a stage. This was Sheridan — a mocking-bird through the entire scale, from the highest to the lowest note of the gamut; in fact, to borrow a coarse word, the mere impersonation of

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humbug. Even as a wit, he has been long known to be a wholesale plagiarist; and the exposures of his kind biographer, Mr. Moore, exhibit him in that line as the most hide-bound and sterile of performers, lying perdue through a whole evening for a casual opportunity, or by miserable stratagem creating an artificial one, for exploding some poor starveling jest; and, in fact, sacrificing to this petty ambition, in a degree never before heard of, the ease and dignity of his life. But it is in the character of a rhetorical orator, that he, and his friends in his behalf, have put forward the hollowest pretensions. In the course of the Hastings' trial, upon the concerns of paralytic *Begums*, and ancient *Rannies*, hags that, if ever actually existing, were no more to us and our British sympathies, than we to Hecuba, did Mr. Sheridan make his capital exhibition. The real value of his speech was never at any time misappreciated by the judicious; for his attempts at the grand, the pathetic, and the sentimental, had been continually in the same tone of falsetto and horrible fustian. Burke, however, who was the most double-minded person in the world, cloaked his contempt in hyperbolical flattery; and all the unhappy people who have since written lives of Burke, adopt the whole for mere gospel truth. Exactly in the same vein of tumid inanity, is the speech which Mr. Sheridan puts into the mouth of Rolla the Peruvian. This the reader may chance to have heard upon the stage; or, in default of that good luck, we present him with the following fragrant twaddle from one of the Begummiads, which has been enshrined in the praises (*si quid sua carmina possunt*) of many worthy critics; the subject is *Filial Piety*. 'Filial

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piety,' (Mr. Sheridan said,) 'it was impossible by words to describe, but description by words was unnecessary. It was that duty which they all felt and understood, and which required not the powers of language to explain. It was in truth more properly to be called a *principle* than a duty. It required not the aid of memory; it needed not the exercise of the understanding; it awaited not the slow deliberations of reason; it flowed spontaneously from the fountain of our feelings; it was involuntary in our natures; it was a quality of our being, innate and coeval with life, which, though afterwards cherished as a passion, was independent of our mental powers; it was earlier than all intelligence in our souls; it displayed itself in the earliest impulses of the heart, and was an emotion of fondness that returned in smiles of gratitude the affectionate solicitudes, the tender anxieties, the endearing attentions experienced before memory began, but which were not less dear for not being remembered. It was the sacrament of nature in our hearts, by which the union of the parent and child was seated and rendered perfect in the community of love; and which, strengthening and ripening with life, acquired vigor from the understanding, and was most lively and active when most wanted.' Now we put it to any candid reader, whether the above Birmingham ware might not be vastly improved by one slight alteration, viz. omitting the two first words, and reading it as a conundrum. Considered as rhetoric, it is evidently fitted 'to make a horse sick;' but as a conundrum in the Lady's Magazine, we contend that it would have great success.

How it aggravates the disgust with which these

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paste-diamonds are now viewed, to remember that they were paraded in the presence of Edmund Burke — nay, (*credite posteri!*) in jealous rivalry of his genuine and priceless jewels. Irresistibly one is reminded of the dancing efforts of Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Skeggs, against the native grace of the Vicar of Wakefield's family: — 'The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy, but without success. *They swam, sprawled, languished, and frisked;* but all would not do. The gazers, indeed, owned that it was fine; but neighbor Flamborough observed, that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo.' Of Goldsmith it was said, in his epitaph, — *Nil tetigit quod non ornavit;* of the Drury-Lane rhetorician it might be said, with equal truth, — *Nil tetigit quod non fuco adulteravit.* But avaunt, Birmingham! let us speak of a great man.

All hail to Edmund Burke, the supreme writer of his century, the man of the largest and finest understanding! Upon that word, *understanding*, we lay a stress: for oh! ye immortal donkeys, who have written 'about him and about him,' with what an obstinate stupidity have ye brayed away for one-third of a century about that which ye are pleased to call his 'fancy.' Fancy in your throats, ye miserable twaddlers! as if Edmund Burke were the man to play with his fancy, for the purpose of separable ornament. He was a man of fancy in no other sense than as Lord Bacon was so, and Jeremy Taylor, and as all large and discursive thinkers are and must be: that is to say, the fancy which he had in common with all mankind, and very probably in no eminent

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degree, in him was urged into unusual activity under the necessities of his capacious understanding. His great and peculiar distinction was that he viewed all objects of the understanding under more relations than other men, and under more complex relations. According to the multiplicity of these relations, a man is said to have a *large* understanding; according to their subtilty, a *fine* one; and in an angelic understanding, all things would appear to be related to all. Now, to apprehend and detect moral relations, or to pursue them steadily, is a process absolutely impossible without the intervention of physical analogies. To say, therefore, that a man is a great thinker, or a fine thinker, is but another expression for saying that he has a *schematizing* (or, to use a plainer but less accurate expression, a figurative) understanding. In that sense, and for that purpose, Burke is figurative: but understood, as he *has* been understood by the long-eared race of his critics, not as thinking in and by his figures, but as deliberately laying them on by way of enamel or after-ornament, — not as *incarnating*, but simply as *dressing* his thoughts in imagery, — so understood, he is not the Burke of reality, but a poor fictitious Burke, modelled after the poverty of conception which belongs to his critics.

It is true, however, that, in some rare cases, Burke *did* indulge himself in a pure rhetorician's use of fancy; consciously and profusely lavishing his ornaments for mere purposes of effect. Such a case occurs, for instance, in that admirable picture of the degradation of Europe, where he represents the different crowned heads as bidding against each other at Basle for the favor and countenance of Regicide.

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Others of the same kind there are in his brilliant letter on the Duke of Bedford's attack upon him in the House of Lords: and one of these we shall here cite, disregarding its greater chance for being already familiar to the reader, upon two considerations; first, that it has all the appearance of being finished with the most studied regard to effect; and, secondly, for an interesting anecdote connected with it, which we have never seen in print, but for which we have better authority than could be produced perhaps for most of those which are. The anecdote is, that Burke, conversing with Dr. Lawrence and another gentleman on the *literary* value of his own writings, declared that the particular passage in the entire range of his works which had cost him the most labor, and upon which, as tried by a certain canon of his own, his labor seemed to himself to have been the most successful, was the following:

After an introductory paragraph which may be thus abridged — 'The crown has considered *me* after long service. The crown has paid the Duke of Bedford by advance. He has had a long credit for any service which he may perform hereafter. He is secure, and long may he be secure, in his advance, whether he performs any services or not. His grants are engrafted on the public law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the sacred rule of prescription. The learned professors of the *Rights of Man*, however, regard prescription not as a title to bar all other claim — but as a bar against the possessor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than an aggravated injustice.' Then follows the passage in question:

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'Such are *their* ideas; such *their* religion; and such *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well-compacted structure of our church and state, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortress at once and a temple (*Templum in modum arcis**), shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion; — as long as the British monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the state, shall, like the proud Keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of his kindred and coeval towers, as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subjected land — so long the mounds and dykes of the low, fat, Bedford level † will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levellers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects the lords and commons of this realm, the triple cord which no man can break: the solemn sworn constitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each other's being, and each other's rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order for every kind and every quality of property and of dignity, — as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe; and we are all safe together; — the high from the blights of envy, and the spoliation of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppression, and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen! and so be it: and so it will be,

"Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum
Accolet; imperiumque pater Romanus habebit."'

* Tacitus of the Temple of Jerusalem.

† *Bedford level*, a rich tract of land so called in Bedfordshire.

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This was the sounding passage which Burke alleged as the *chef-d'œuvre* of his rhetoric; and the argument, upon which he justified his choice, is specious — if not convincing. He laid it down as a maxim of composition, that every passage in a rhetorical performance, which was brought forward prominently, and relied upon as a *key* (to use the language of war) in sustaining the main position of the writer, ought to involve a thought, an image, and a sentiment: and such a synthesis he found in the passage which we have quoted. This criticism, over and above the pleasure which it always gives to hear a great man's opinion of himself, is valuable, as showing that Burke, because negligent of trivial inaccuracies, was not at all the less anxious about the larger proprieties and decorums: [for this passage, confessedly so labored, has several instances of slovenliness in trifles;] and that, in the midst of his apparent hurry, he carried out a jealous vigilance upon what he wrote, and the eye of a person practised in artificial effects.

An ally of Burke's upon East Indian politics, ought to have a few words of notice, not so much for any power that he actually had as a rhetorician, but because he is sometimes reputed such. This was Sir Philip Francis, who, under his early disguise of Junius, had such a success as no writer of libels ever will have again. It is our private opinion, that this success rested upon a great delusion which has never been exposed. The general belief is — that Junius was read for his elegance; we believe no such thing. The pen of an angel would not, upon such a theme as personal politics, have upheld the interest attached to Junius, had there been no other cause in co-opera-

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tion. Language, after all, is a limited instrument: and it must be remembered that Junius, by the extreme narrowness of his range, which went entirely upon matters of fact, and personal interests, still further limited the compass of that limited instrument. For it is only in the expression and management of general ideas, that any room arises for conspicuous elegance. The real truth is this: the interest in Junius travelled downwards; he was read in the lower ranks, because in London it speedily became known that he was read with peculiar interest in the highest. This was already a marvel; for newspaper patriots under the signatures of Publicola, Brutus, and so forth, had become a jest and a by-word to the real, practical statesman; and any man at leisure to write for so disinterested a purpose as 'his country's good,' was presumed, of course, to write in a garret. But here for the first time a pretended patriot, a Junius Brutus, was anticipated with anxiety, and read with agitation. Is any man simple enough to believe that such a contagion could extend to cabinet ministers, and official persons overladen with public business, on so feeble an excitement as a little reputation in the art of constructing sentences with elegance; an elegance which, after all, excluded eloquence and every other *positive* quality of excellence? That this can have been believed, shows the readiness with which men swallow marvels. The real secret was this: — Junius was read with the profoundest interest by members of the cabinet, who would not have paid half-a-crown for all the wit and elegance of this world, simply because it was most evident that some traitor was amongst them; and that either directly by

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one of themselves, or through some abuse of his confidence by a servant, the secrets of office were betrayed. The circumstances of this breach of trust are now fully known; and it is readily understood why letters, which were the channel for those perfidies, should interest the ministry of that day in the deepest degree. The existence of such an interest, but not its cause, had immediately become known: it descended, as might be expected, amongst all classes: once excited, it seemed to be justified by the real merits of the letters; which merit again, illustrated by its effects, appeared a thousand times greater than it was; and, finally, this interest was heightened and sustained by the mystery which invested the author. How much that mystery availed in keeping alive the reputation of Junius, is clear from this fact, that, since the detection of Junius, the Letters have much declined in popularity; and ornamented editions of them are no longer the saleable article which they were some years ago.

In fact, upon any other principle, the continued triumph of Junius, and his establishment as a classical author, is a standing enigma. One talent, undoubtedly, he had in a rare perfection — the talent of sarcasm. He stung like a scorpion. But, besides that such a talent has a narrow application, an interest of personality cannot be other than fugitive, take what direction it may: and malignity cannot embalm itself in materials that are themselves perishable. Such were the materials of Junius. His vaunted elegance was, in a great measure, the gift of his subject: general terseness, short sentences, and a careful avoiding of all awkwardness of construction — these

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were his advantages. And from these he would have been dislodged by a higher subject, or one that would have forced him out into a wider compass of thought. Rhetorician he was none, though he has often been treated as such; for, without sentiment, without imagery, without generalization, how should it be possible for rhetoric to subsist? It is an absolute fact, that Junius has not one principle, aphorism, or remark of a general nature in his whole armory — not in a solitary instance did his barren understanding ascend to an abstraction, or general idea, but lingered forever in the dust and rubbish of individuality, amongst the tangible reality of things and persons. Hence, the peculiar absurdity of that hypothesis which discovered Junius in the person of Burke. The opposition was here too pointedly ludicrous between Burke, who exalted the merest personal themes into the dignity of philosophic speculations, and Junius, in whose hands the very loftiest dwindled into questions of person and party.

Last of the family of rhetoricians, and in a form of rhetoric as florid as the age could bear, came Mr. Canning. 'Sufficit,' says a Roman author, 'in una civitate esse unum rhetorem.' But, if more were in his age unnecessary, in ours they would have been intolerable. Three or four Mr. Cannings would have been found a nuisance: indeed, the very admiration which crowned his great displays, manifested of itself the unsuitableness of his style to the atmosphere of public affairs; for it was of that kind which is offered to a young lady rising from a brilliant performance on the piano-forte. Something, undoubtedly, there was of too juvenile an air, too gaudy a flutter of plumage,

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in Mr. Canning's more solemn exhibitions; but much indulgence was reasonably extended to a man, who, in his class, was so complete. He was formed for winning a favorable attention by every species of popular fascination: to the eye he recommended himself almost as much as the Bolingbroke of a century before: his voice, and his management of it, were no less pleasing: and upon him, as upon St. John, the air of a gentleman sate with a native grace. Scholarship and literature, as far as they belong to the accomplishments of a gentleman, he too brought forward in the most graceful manner: and above all, there was an impression of honor, generosity, and candor, stamped upon his manner, agreeable rather to his original character, than to the wrench which it had received from an ambition resting too much on mere personal merits. What a pity that this 'gay creature of the elements' had not taken his place contentedly, where nature had assigned it, as one of the ornamental performers of the time! His station was with the lilies of the field, which toil not, neither do they spin. He should have thrown himself upon the admiring sympathies of the world as the most dazzling of rhetorical artists, rather than have challenged their angry passions in a vulgar scuffle for power. In that case he would have been alive at this hour — he would have had a perpetuity of that admiration which to him was as the breath of his nostrils; and would not, by forcing the character of rhetorician into an incongruous alliance with that of trading politician, have run the risk of making both ridiculous.

In thus running over the modern history of rhetoric

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we have confined ourselves to the literature of England: the rhetoric of the continent would demand a separate notice, and chiefly on account of the French pulpit orators. For, laying them aside, we are not aware of any distinct body of rhetoric — properly so called — in modern literature. Four continental languages may be said to have a literature regularly mounted in all departments, viz. the French, Italian, Spanish, and German; but each of these have stood under separate disadvantages for the cultivation of an ornamented rhetoric. In France, whatever rhetoric they have, (for Montaigne, though lively, is too gossiping for a rhetorician,) arose in the age of Louis XIV.; since which time, the very same development of science and public business, operated there and in England, to stifle the rhetorical impulses, and all those analogous tendencies in arts and in manners which support it. Generally it may be assumed that rhetoric will not survive the age of the ceremonious in manners, and the gorgeous in costume. An unconscious sympathy binds together the various forms of the elaborate and the fanciful, under every manifestation Hence it is that the national convulsions by which modern France has been shaken, produced orators, Mirabeau, Isnard, the Abbé Maury, but no rhetoricians. Florian, Chateaubriand, and others, who have written the most florid prose that the modern taste can bear, are elegant sentimentalists, sometimes maudlin and semi-poetic, sometimes even eloquent, but never rhetorical. There is no eddying about their own thoughts; no motion of fancy self-sustained from its own activities; no flux and reflux of thought, half meditative, half capricious; but strains of feeling

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genuine or not, supported at every step from the excitement of independent external objects.

With respect to the German literature, the case is very peculiar. A chapter upon German rhetoric would be in the same ludicrous predicament as Van Troil's chapter on the snakes of Iceland, which delivers its business in one summary sentence, announcing, that snakes in Iceland — there are none. Rhetoric, in fact, or any form of ornamented prose, could not possibly arise in a literature, in which prose itself had no proper existence till within these seventy years. Lessing was the first German who wrote prose with elegance; and even at this day, a decent prose style is the rarest of accomplishments in Germany. We doubt, indeed, whether any German has written prose with grace, unless he had lived abroad, (like Jacobi, who composed indifferently in French and German,) or had at least cultivated a very long acquaintance with English and French models. Frederick Schlegel has been led, by his comprehensive knowledge of other literatures, to observe this singular defect in that of his own country. Even he, however, must have fixed his standard very low, when he could praise, as elsewhere he does, the style of Kant. Certainly in any literature, where good models of prose existed, Kant would be deemed a monster of vicious diction, so far as regards the construction of his sentences. He does not, it is true, write in the hybrid dialect which prevailed up to the time of our George the First, when every other word was Latin, with a German inflexion; but he has in perfection that obtuseness which renders a German taste insensible to all beauty in the balancing and structure of peri-

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ods, and to the art by which a succession of periods modify each other. Every German regards a sentence in the light of a package, and a package not for the mail-coach, but for the wagon, into which his privilege is to crowd as much as he possibly can. Having framed a sentence, therefore, he next proceeds to *pack* it, which is effected partly by unwieldy tails and codicils, but chiefly by enormous parenthetic involutions. All qualifications, limitations, exceptions, illustrations, are stuffed and violently rammed into the bowels of the principal proposition. That all this equipage of accessaries is not so arranged as to assist its own orderly development, no more occurs to a German as any fault, than that in a package of shawls or of carpets, the colors and patterns are not fully displayed. To him it is sufficient that they are *there*. And Mr. Kant, when he has succeeded in packing up a sentence which covers three close-printed octavo pages, stops to draw his breath with the air of one who looks back upon some brilliant and meritorious performance. Under these disadvantages, it may be presumed that German rhetoric is a nonentity; but these disadvantages would not have arisen, had there been a German bar or a German senate, with any public existence. In the absence of all forensic and senatorial eloquence, no standard of good prose style — nay, which is more important, no example of ambition directed to such an object — has been at any time held up to the public mind in Germany; and the pulpit style has been always either rustically negligent, or bristling with pedantry.

These disadvantages with regard to public models

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of civil eloquence, have in part affected the Italians; the few good prose writers of Italy have been historians; and it is observable that no writers exist in the department of what are called *Moral Essayists;* a class which, with us and the French, were the last depositaries of the rhetorical faculty, when depressed to its lowest key. Two other circumstances may be noticed as unfavorable to an Italian rhetoric; one, to which we have adverted before, in the language itself — which is too loitering for the agile motion, and the το ἀγχίφρονον of rhetoric; and the other in the constitution of the national mind, which is not reflective, nor remarkably fanciful — the two qualities most indispensable to rhetoric. As a proof of the little turn for reflection which there is in the Italian mind, we may remind the reader that they have no meditative or philosophic poetry, such as that of our Young, Cowper, &c.; a class of poetry which existed very early indeed in the English literature, (*e. g.* Sir T. Davies, Lord Brooke, Henry More, &c.;) and which, in some shape, has arisen at some stage of almost every European literature.

Of the Spanish rhetoric, *à priori*, we should have augured well: but the rhetoric of their pulpit in past times, which is all that we know of it, is vicious and unnatural; whilst, on the other hand, for eloquence profound and heartfelt, measuring it by those many admirable proclamations issued in all quarters of Spain during 1808–9, the national capacity must be presumed to be of the very highest order.

We are thus thrown back upon the French pulpit orators as the only considerable body of modern rhetoricians out of our own language. No writers

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are more uniformly praised; none are more entirely neglected. This is one of those numerous hypocrisies so common in matters of taste, where the critic is always ready with his good word, as the readiest way of getting rid of the subject. To blame might be hazardous; for blame demands reasons; but praise enjoys a ready dispensation from all reasons and from all discrimination. Superstition, however, as it is, under which the French rhetoricians hold their reputation, we have no thought of attempting any disturbance to it in so slight and incidental a notice as this. Let critics by all means continue to invest them with every kind of imaginary splendor. Meantime let us suggest, as a judicious caution, that French rhetoric should be praised with a reference only to its own narrow standard: for it would be a most unfortunate trial of its pretensions, to bring so meagre a style of composition into a close comparison with the gorgeous opulence of the English rhetoric of the same century. Under such a comparison, two capital points of weakness would force themselves upon the least observant of critics — first, the defect of striking imagery; and, secondly, the slenderness of the thoughts. The rhetorical manner is supported in the French writers chiefly by an abundance of *ohs* and *ahs* — by interrogatories — apostrophes — and startling exclamations: all which are mere mechanical devices for raising the style; but in the substance of the composition, apart from its dress, there is nothing properly rhetorical. The leading thoughts in all pulpit eloquence being derived from religion, and, in fact, the common inheritance of human nature, — if they cannot be novel, for that very reason cannot be

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undignified; but, for the same reason, they are apt to become unaffecting and trite, unless varied and individualized by new infusions of thought and feeling. The smooth monotony of the leading religious topics, as managed by the French orators, under the treatment of Jeremy Taylor, receives at each turn of the sentence a new flexure — or what may be called a separate *articulation*:[6] old thoughts are surveyed from novel stations and under various angles: and a field absolutely exhausted throws up eternally fresh verdure under the fructifying lava of burning imagery. *Human life*, for example, *is short — human happiness is frail:* how trite, how obvious a thesis! Yet, in the beginning of the *Holy Dying*, upon that simplest of themes how magnificent a descant! Variations the most original upon a ground the most universal, and a sense of novelty diffused over truths coeval with human life! Finally, it may be remarked of the imagery in the French rhetoric, that it is thinly sown, common-place, deficient in splendor, and, above all, merely ornamental; that is to say, it does no more than echo and repeat what is already said in the thought which it is brought to illustrate; whereas, in Jeremy Taylor, and in Burke, it will be found usually to extend and amplify the thought, or to fortify it by some indirect argument of its truth. Thus, for instance, in the passage above quoted, from Taylor, upon the insensibility of man to the continual mercies of God, at first view the mind is staggered by the apparent impossibility that so infinite a reality, and of so continual a recurrence, should escape our notice; but the illustrative image, drawn from the case of a man standing at the bottom of the ocean, and yet insensible

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to that world of waters above him, from the uniformity and equality of its pressure, flashes upon us with a sense of something equally marvellous, in a case which we know to be a physical fact. We are thus reconciled to the proposition, by the same image which illustrates it.

In a single mechanical quality of good writing, that is, in the structure of their sentences, the French rhetoricians, in common with French writers generally of that age, are superior to ours. This is what in common parlance is expressed (though inaccurately) by the word *style*, and is the subject of the third part of the work before us. Dr. Whately, however, somewhat disappoints us by his mode of treating it. He alleges, indeed, with some plausibility, that his subject bound him to consider style no further than as it was related to the purpose of persuasion. But besides that it is impossible to treat it with effect in that mutilated section — even within the limits assumed, we are not able to trace any outline of the law or system by which Dr. Whately has been governed in the choice of his topics: we find many very acute remarks delivered, but all in a desultory way, which leave the reader no means of judging how much of the ground has been surveyed, and how much omitted. We regret also that he has not addressed himself more specifically to the question of English style, a subject which has not yet received the comprehensive discussion which it merits. In the age of our great rhetoricians, it is remarkable that the English language had never been made an object of conscious attention. No man seems to have reflected that there was a wrong and a right in the choice of words — in the

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choice of phrases — in the mechanism of sentences — or even in the grammar. Men wrote eloquently, because they wrote feelingly: they wrote idiomatically, because they wrote naturally, and without affectation: but if a false or acephalous structure of sentence, — if a barbarous idiom, or an exotic word happened to present itself, — no writer of the 17th century seems to have had any such scrupulous sense of the dignity belonging to his own language, as should make it a duty to reject, or worth his while to re-model a line. The fact is, that verbal criticism had not as yet been very extensively applied even to the classical languages: the Scaligers, Casaubon, and Salmasius, were much more critics on things than critics philologically. However, even in that age, the French writers were more attentive to the cultivation of their mother tongue, than any other people. It is justly remarked by Schlegel, that the most worthless writers amongst the French, as to matter, generally take pains with their diction; or perhaps it is more true to say, that with equal pains, in their language it is more easy to write well than in one of greater compass. It is also true, that the French are indebted for their greater purity from foreign idioms, to their much more limited acquaintance with foreign literature. Still, with every deduction from the merit, the fact is as we have said; and it is apparent, not only by innumerable evidences in the *concrete*, but by the superiority of all their *abstract* auxiliaries in the art of writing. We English, even at this day, have no learned grammar of our language; nay, we have allowed the blundering attempt, in that department, of an imbecile stranger, to supersede the learned

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(however imperfect) works of our Wallis, Lowth, &c.; we have also no sufficient dictionary; and we have no work at all, sufficient or insufficient, on the phrases and idiomatic niceties of our language, corresponding to the works of Vaugelas and others, for the French.

Hence an anomaly, not found perhaps in any literature but ours, that the most eminent English writers do not write their mother tongue without continual violations of propriety. With the single exception of Mr. Wordsworth, who has paid an honorable attention to the purity and accuracy of his English, we believe that there is not one celebrated author of this day who has written two pages consecutively, without some flagrant impropriety in the grammar, (such as the eternal confusion of the preterite with the past participle, confusion of verbs transitive with intransitive, &c. &c.) or some violation more or less of the vernacular idiom. If this last sort of blemish does not occur so frequently in modern books, the reason is, — that since Dr. Johnson's time, the freshness of the idiomatic style has been too frequently abandoned for the lifeless mechanism of a style purely bookish and artificial.

The practical judgments of Dr. Whately are such as will seldom be disputed. Dr. Johnson for his triads and his antithetic balances, he taxes more than once with a plethoric and tautologic tympany of sentence; and in the following passage, with a very happy illustration: — 'Sentences, which might have been expressed as simple ones, are expanded into complex ones by the addition of clauses which add little or nothing to the sense; and which have been compared

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to the false handles and key-holes with which furniture is decorated, that serve no other purpose than to *correspond to the real ones.* Much of Dr. Johnson's writings is chargeable with this fault.'

We recollect a little biographic sketch of Dr. Johnson, published immediately after his death, in which, amongst other instances of desperate tautology, the author quotes the well known lines from the imitation of Juvenal —

> 'Let observation, with extensive view,
> Survey mankind from China to Peru;'

and contends, with some reason, that this is saying in effect, — '*Let observation with extensive observation observe mankind extensively.*' Certainly Dr. Johnson was the most faulty writer in this kind of inanity that ever has played tricks with language.[7] On the other hand, Burke was the least so; and we are petrified to find him described by Dr. Whately as a writer 'qui variare cupit rem prodigialiter unam,' and as on that account offensive to good taste. The understanding of Burke was even morbidly impatient of tautology: progress and motion — everlasting motion — was a mere necessity of his intellect. We will venture to offer a king's ransom for one unequivocal case of tautology from the whole circle of Burke's writings. The *principium indiscernibilium*, upon which Leibnitz affirmed the impossibility of finding any two leaves of a tree that should be mere duplicates of each other, may be applied to Burke as safely as to nature; no two propositions, we are satisfied, can be found in *him*, which do not contain a larger variety than is requisite to their justification.

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Speaking of the advantages for energy and effect in the license of arrangement open to the ancient languages, especially to the Latin, Dr. Whately cites the following sentence from the opening of the 4th Book of Q. Curtius: — *Darius tanti modo exercitus rex, qui, triumphantis magis quam dimicantis more, curru sublimis inierat prœlium, — per loca, quæ prope immensis agminibus compleverat, jam inania, et ingenti solitudine vasta fugiebat.* 'The effect,' says he, 'of the concluding verb, placed where it is, is most striking.'[8] The sentence is far enough from a good one: but, confining ourselves to the sort of merit for which it is here cited, as a merit peculiar to the Latin, we must say that the very same position of the verb, with a finer effect, is attainable, and, in fact, often attained in English sentences: see, for instance, the passage in the Duke of Gloucester's soliloquy — *Now is the winter of our discontent* — and ending, *In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.* See also another at the beginning of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity on the thanklessness of the labor employed upon the *foundations* of truth, which, says he, like those of buildings, 'are in the bosom of the earth concealed.' The fact is, that the common cases of inversion, such as the suspension of the verb to the end, and the anticipation of the objective case at the beginning, are not sufficient illustrations of the Latin structure. All this can be done as well by the English. It is not mere power of inversion, but of self-intrication, and of self-dislocation, which mark the extremity of the artificial structure; that power by which a sequence of words, that naturally is directly consecutive, commences, intermits, and reappears at a remote part

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of the sentence, like what is called drake-stone on the surface of a river. In this power the Greek is almost as much below the Latin as all modern languages; and in this, added to its elliptic brevity of connection and transition, and to its wealth and abstractions 'the long-tailed words in *osity* and *ation*,' lie the peculiar capacities of the Latin for rhetoric.

Dr. W. lays it down as a maxim in rhetoric, that 'elaborate stateliness is always to be regarded as a worse fault than the slovenliness and languor which accompany a very loose style.' But surely this is a rash position: — stateliness the most elaborate, in an *absolute* sense, is no fault at all; though it may happen to be so in relation to a given subject, or to any subject under given circumstances. 'Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords.' Reading these words, who would not be justly offended in point of taste, had his feast been characterized by elegant simplicity? Again, at a coronation, what can be more displeasing to a philosophic taste than a pretended chastity of ornament, at war with the very purposes of a solemnity essentially magnificent? An imbecile friend of ours, in 1825, brought us a sovereign of a new coinage, 'which' (said he) 'I admire, because it is so elegantly simple.' This, he flattered himself, was thinking like a man of taste. But mark how we sent him to the right about; 'and *that*, weak-minded friend, is exactly the thing which a coin ought not to be: the duty of a golden coin is to be as florid as it can, rich with Corinthian ornaments, and as gorgeous as a peacock's tail.' So of rhetoric, imagine that you read these words of introduction, '*And on a set day, Tullius Cicero re-*

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turned thanks to Cæsar on behalf of Marcus Marcellus,' what sort of a speech is reasonably to be expected? The whole purpose being a festal and ceremonial one, thanksgiving its sole burden first and last, what else than the most 'elaborate stateliness?' If it were not stately, and to the very verge of the pompous, Mr. Wolf would have had one argument more than he had, and a better than any he has produced, for suspecting the authenticity of that thrice famous oration.

In the course of his dissertation on style, Dr. W., very needlessly, enters upon the thorny question of the *quiddity*, or characteristic difference, of poetry as distinguished from prose.[9] We could much have wished that he had forborne to meddle with a *quæstio vexata* of this nature, both because, in so incidental and cursory a discussion, it could not receive a proper investigation; and because Dr. Whately is apparently not familiar with much of what has been written on that subject. On a matter so slightly discussed, we shall not trouble ourselves to enter farther, than to express our astonishment that a logician like Dr. Whately should have allowed himself to deliver so nugatory an argument as this which follows: — 'Any composition in *verse*, (and none that is not,) is always called, whether good or bad, a poem, by all who have no favorite hypothesis to maintain.' And the inference manifestly is, that it is rightly so called. Now, if a man has taken up any fixed opinion on the subject, no matter whether wrong or right, and has reasons to give for his opinion, this man comes under the description of those who have a favorite hypothesis to maintain. It follows, therefore, that the only class

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of people whom Dr. Whately will allow as unbiassed judges on this question — a question not of fact, but of opinion — are those who have, and who profess to have, no opinion at all upon the subject; or, having one, have no reasons for it. But, apart from this contradiction, how is it possible that Dr. Whately should, in *any* case, plead a popular usage of speech, as of any weight in a philosophic argument? Still more, how is it possible in *this* case, where the accuracy of the popular usage is the very thing in debate, so that — if pleaded at all — it must be pleaded as its own justification? Alms-giving — and nothing but alms-giving — is universally called *charity*, and mistaken for the charity of the Scriptures, by all who have no favorite hypothesis to maintain — *i. e.* by all the inconsiderate. But Dr. Whately will hardly draw any argument from this usage in defence of that popular notion.

In speaking thus freely of particular passages in Dr. Whately's book, we are so far from meaning any disrespect to him, that, on the contrary, if we had not been impressed with the very highest respect for his talents, by the acuteness and originality which illuminate every part of his book, we could not have allowed ourselves to spend as much time upon the whole, as we have, in fact, spent upon single paragraphs. In reality, there is not a section of his work which has not furnished us with occasion for some profitable speculations; and we are, in consequence, most anxious to see his *Logic*, which treats a subject so much more important than *rhetoric*, and so obstinately misrepresented, that it would delight us much to anticipate a radical exposure of the errors on this

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subject, taken up from the days of Lord Bacon. It has not fallen in our way to quote much from Dr. Whately *totidem verbis;* our apology for which will be found in the broken and discontinuous method of treatment by short sections and paragraphs, which a subject of this nature has necessarily imposed upon him. Had it coincided with our purpose to go more into detail, we could have delighted our readers with some brilliant examples of philosophical penetration, applied to questions interesting from their importance or difficulty, with the happiest effect. As it is, we shall content ourselves with saying, that, in any elementary work, it has not been our fortune to witness a rarer combination of analytical acuteness, with severity of judgment; and when we add that these qualities are recommended by a scholar-like elegance of manner, we suppose it hardly necessary to add, that Dr. Whately's is incomparably the best book of its class, since the days of Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric.*

[Note. — In what is said at the beginning of this paper of the true meaning of the enthymeme, as determined by Facciolati, we must be understood with an exclusive reference to rhetoric. In logic the old acceptation cannot be disturbed.]

Jan. 67.

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NOTES.

Note 1. Page 214.

It is ludicrous to see the perplexity of some translators and commentators of the Rhetoric, who, having read it under a false point of view, and understood it in the sense of Aristotle's own deliberate judgment on the truth, labor to defend it on that footing. On its real footing it needs no defence.

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Note 2. Page 215.

It stands at p. 227 of *Jacobi Facciolati Orationis XII., Acroases, &c.* Patavii, 1729. This is the second Italian edition, and was printed at the University Press.

Note 3. Page 216.

Upon an innovation of such magnitude, and which will be so startling to scholars, it is but fair that Facciolati should have the benefit of all his own arguments: and we have therefore resolved to condense them. 1. He begins with that very passage (or one of them) on which the received idea of the enthymeme most relies; and from this he derives an argument for the new idea. The passage is to this effect, that the enthymeme is composed ἐκ πολλαχις ἐλαττονων ἡ ἐξ ὧν ὁ συλλογισμος — *i. e. frequently* consists of fewer parts than the syllogism. *Frequently!* What logic is there in *that?* Can it be imagined, that so rigorous a logician as Aristotle would notice, as a circumstance of frequent occurrence in an enthymeme, what, by the received doctrine, should be its mere essence and differential principle? To say that this happens frequently, is to say, by implication, that sometimes it does *not* happen — *i. e.* that it is an accident, and no part of the definition, since it may thus confessedly be absent, *salva ratione conceptus.* 2. Waiving this argument, and sup-

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posing the suppression of one proposition to be even universal in the enthymeme, still it would be an impertinent circumstance, and (philosophically speaking) an accident. Could it be tolerated, that a great systematic distinction (for such it is in Aristotle) should rest upon a mere abbreviation of convenience? 'Quasi vero argumentandi ratio et natura varietur, cum brevius effertur;' whereas Aristotle himself tells us, that 'οὐ πρὸς τὸν ἐξω λογον ἡ ἀποδειξις, ἀλλα πρὸς τον ἐν τῃ ψυχῃ.' 3. From a particular passage in the 2d book of the Prior Analytics, (chap. 27,) generally interpreted in a way to favor the existing account of the enthymeme, after first of all showing, that under a more accurate construction it is incompatible with that account, whilst it is in perfect harmony with the new one, Facciolati deduces an explanation of that accidental peculiarity in the enthymeme, which has attracted such undue attention as to eclipse its true characteristic: the peculiarity, we mean, of being entitled (though not, as the common idea is, required) to suppress one proposition. So much we shall here anticipate, as to say, that this privilege arises out of the peculiar *matter* of the enthymeme, which fitted it for the purposes of the rhetorician; and these purposes being loose and popular, brought with them proportionable indulgences; whereas the syllogism, technically so called, employing a severer matter, belonged peculiarly to the dialectician, or philosophic disputant, whose purposes being rigorous and scientific, imposed much closer restrictions; and one of these was, that he should in no case suppress any proposition, however obvious, but should formally enunciate all: just as in the debating schools of later ages it has always been the rule, that before urging his objection, the opponent should repeat the respondent's syllogism. Hence, although the rhetorician naturally used his privilege, and enthymemes were in fact generally shorn of one proposition, (and *vice versa* with respect to syllogisms in the strict philosophic sense,) yet was all this a mere effect of usage and accident; and it was very possible for an enthymeme to have its full complement of parts, whilst a syllogism might be defective in the very way which is falsely supposed to be of the essence of an enthymeme. 4. He derives an argument from an inconsistency with which Aristotle has been thought chargeable under the old idea of the enthymeme, and with which Gassendi

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has in fact charged him.* 5. He meets and rebuts the force of a principal argument in favor of the enthymeme as commonly understood, viz. that, in a particular part of the Prior Analytics, the enthymeme is called συλλογισμος ατελης — an *imperfect* syllogism, which word the commentators generally expound by '*mutilus atque imminutus*.' Here he uses the assistance of the excellent J. Pace, whom he justly describes as 'virum Græcarum litterarum peritissimum, philosophum in primis bonum, et Aristotelis interpretum quot sunt, quotque fuerunt, quotque futuri sunt, longe præstantissimum.' This admirable commentator, so indispensable to all who would study the Organon and the Περι Ψυχης, had himself originally started that hypothesis which we are now reporting, as long afterwards adopted and improved by Facciolati. Considering the unrivalled qualifications of Pace, this of itself is a great argument on our side. The objection before us, from the word ἀτελης, Pace disposes of briefly and conclusively: *first*, he says, that the word is wanting in four MSS.; and he has no doubt himself 'quin ex glossemate irrepserit in contextum:' *secondly*, the Latin translators and schoolmen, as Agricola and many others, take no notice of this word in their versions and commentaries: *thirdly*, the Greek commentators, such as Joannes Grammaticus and Alexander Aphrodisiensis, clearly had no knowledge of any such use of the word *enthymeme*, as that which has prevailed in later times; which is plain from this, that wherever they have occasion to speak of a syllogism wanting one of its members, they do not in any instance call it an enthymeme, but a συλλογισμος μονολημματον.

Note 4. Page 222.

This, added to the style and quality of his poems, makes it the more remarkable that Virgil should have been deemed a rhetorician. Yet so it was. Walsh notices, in the Life of Virgil, which he furnished for his friend Dryden's Translation, that 'his (Vir-

* However, as in reality the whole case was one of mere misapprehension on the part of Gassendi, and has, in fact, nothing at all to do with the nature of the enthymeme, well or ill understood, Facciolati takes nothing by this particular argument, which, however, we have retained, to make our analysis complete.

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gil's) rhetoric, was in such general esteem, that lectures were read upon it in the reign of Tiberius, and the subject of declamations taken out of him.'

NOTE 5. Page 239.

In retracing the history of English rhetoric, it may strike the reader that we have made some capital omissions. But in these he will find we have been governed by sufficient reasons. Shakspeare is no doubt a rhetorician, *majorum gentium*; but he is so much more, that scarcely an instance is to be found of his rhetoric which does not pass by fits into a higher element of eloquence or poetry. The first and the last acts, for instance, of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which, in point of composition, is perhaps the most superb work in the language, and beyond all doubt from the loom of Shakspeare, would have been the most gorgeous rhetoric, had they not happened to be something far better. The supplications of the widowed Queens to Theseus, the invocations of their tutelar divinities by Palamon and Arcite, the death of Arcite, &c., are finished in a more elaborate style of excellence than any other almost of Shakspeare's most felicitous scenes. In their first intention, they were perhaps merely rhetorical; but the furnace of composition has transmuted their substance. Indeed, specimens of mere rhetoric would be better sought in some of the other great dramatists, who are under a less fatal necessity of turning everything they touch into the pure gold of poetry. Two other writers, with great original capacities for rhetoric, we have omitted in our list from separate considerations: we mean Sir Walter Raleigh and Lord Bacon. The first will hardly have been missed by the general reader; for his finest passages are dispersed through the body of his bulky history, and are touched with a sadness too pathetic, and of too personal a growth, to fulfil the conditions of a gay rhetoric as an art rejoicing in its own energies. With regard to Lord Bacon, the case is different. He had great advantages for rhetoric, being figurative and sensuous, (as great thinkers must always be,) and having no feelings too profound, or of a nature to disturb the balance of a pleasurable activity; but yet, if we except a few letters, and parts of a few speeches, he never comes forward as a rhetorician. The reason

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is, that being always in quest of absolute truth, he contemplates all subjects — not through the rhetorical fancy, which is most excited by mere seeming resemblances, and such as can only sustain themselves under a single phasis, but through the philosophic fancy, or that which rests upon real analogies. Another unfavorable circumstance, arising in fact out of the plethoric fulness of Lord B.'s mind, is the short-hand style of his composition, in which the connections are seldom fully developed. It was the lively *mot* of a great modern poet, speaking of Lord B.'s Essays, 'that they are not plants but seeds.'

NOTE 6. Page 260.

We may take the opportunity of noticing what it is that constitutes the peculiar and characterizing circumstance in Burke's manner of composition. It is this, — that under his treatment every truth, be it what it may, every thesis of a sentence, *grows* in the very act of unfolding it. Take any sentence you please from Dr. Johnson, suppose, and it will be found to contain a thought — good or bad — fully preconceived. Whereas, in Burke, whatever may have been the preconception, it receives a new determination or inflection at every clause of the sentence. Some collateral adjunct of the main proposition, some temperament or restraint, some oblique glance at its remote affinities, will invariably be found to attend the progress of his sentences — like the spray from a waterfall, or the scintillations from the iron under the blacksmith's hammer. Hence, whilst a writer of Dr. Johnson's class seems only to look back upon his thoughts, Burke looks forward — and does in fact advance and change his own station concurrently with the advance of the sentences. This peculiarity is no doubt in some degree due to the habit of extempore speaking, but not to that only.

NOTE 7. Page 264.

The following illustration, however, from Dr. J.'s critique on Prior's *Solomon*, is far from a happy one: 'He had infused into it much knowledge and much thought; had often *polished* it to *elegance*, *dignified* it with *splendor*, and sometimes *heightened* it to *sublimity*; he perceived in it many excellences, and did not

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perceive that it wanted that, without which all others are of small avail, — the power of *engaging attention*, and *alluring curiosity*.' The parts marked in italics are those to which Dr. W. would object as tautologic. Yet this objection can hardly be sustained: the ideas are all sufficiently discriminated: the fault is, that they are applied to no real corresponding differences in Prior.

NOTE 8. Page 265.

We wish that in so critical a notice of an effect derived from the fortunate position of a single word, Dr. W. had not shocked our ears by this hideous collision of a double '*is*.'

NOTE 9. Page 267.

'*As distinguished from prose.*' Here is one of the many instances in which a false answer is prepared beforehand, by falsely shaping the question. The accessary circumstance, as '*distinguished from prose*,' already prepares a false answer by the very terms of the problem. Poetry *cannot* be distinguished from prose without presupposing the whole question at issue. Those who deny that metre is the characteristic distinction of poetry, deny, by implication, that prose *can* be truly opposed to prose. Some have imagined, that the proper opposition was between poetry and science; but suppose that this is an imperfect opposition, and suppose even that there is no adequate opposition, or counterpole, this is no more than happens in many other cases. One of two poles is often without a name, even where the idea is fully assignable in analysis. But at all events the expression, as 'distinguished from prose,' is a subtle instance of a *petitio principii*.

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SECRET SOCIETIES.

[1847.]

At a very early age commenced my own interest in the mystery that surrounds Secret Societies; the mystery being often double — 1. *What* they do; and 2. What they do it *for*. Except as to the premature growth of this interest, there was nothing surprising in *that*. For everybody that is by nature meditative must regard, with a feeling higher than any vulgar curiosity, small fraternities of men forming themselves as separate and inner vortices within the great vortex of society, communicating silently in broad daylight by signals not even seen, but if seen, not understood except among themselves, and connected by the link either of purposes not safe to be avowed, or by the grander link of awful truths which, merely to shelter themselves from the hostility of an age unprepared for their reception, must retire, perhaps for generations, behind thick curtains of secrecy. To be hidden amidst crowds is sublime — to come down hidden amongst crowds from distant generations, is doubly sublime.

The first incident in my own childish experience that threw my attention upon the possibility of such dark associations, was the Abbé Baruel's book, soon followed by a similar book of Professor Robison's

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in demonstration of a regular conspiracy throughout Europe for exterminating Christianity. This I did not read, but I heard it read and frequently discussed. I had already Latin enough to know that *cancer* meant a crab, and that the disease so appalling to a child's imagination, which in English we call a cancer, as soon as it has passed beyond the state of an indolent schirrous tumor, drew its name from the horrid claws, or spurs, or roots by which it connected itself with distant points, running underground, as it were, baffling detection, and defying radical extirpation. What I heard read aloud from the Abbé gave that dreadful cancerous character to the plot against Christianity. This plot, by the Abbé's account, stretched its horrid fangs, and threw out its forerunning feelers and *tentacles* into many nations, and more than one century. *That* perplexed me, though also fascinating me by its grandeur. How men, living in distant periods and distant places — men that did not know each other, nay, often had not even heard of each other, nor spoke the same languages — could yet be parties to the same treason against a mighty religion towering to the highest heavens, puzzled my comprehension. Then, also, when wickedness was so easy, *why* did they take all this trouble to be wicked? The *how* and the *why* were alike mysterious to me. Yet the Abbé, everybody said, was a good man; incapable of telling falsehoods, or of countenancing falsehoods; and, indeed, to say *that* was superfluous as regarded myself; for every man that wrote a book was in my eyes an essentially good man, being a revealer of hidden truth. Things in MS. might be doubtful, but things printed were unavoidably and profoundly true. So

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that if I questioned and demurred as hotly as an infidel would have done, it never was that by the slightest shade I had become tainted with the infirmity of scepticism. On the contrary, I believed everybody as well as every*thing*. And, indeed, the very starting-point of my too importunate questions was exactly that incapacity of scepticism — not any lurking jealousy that even part might be false, but confidence too absolute that the whole must be true; since the more undeniably a thing was certain, the more clamorous I called upon people to make it intelligible. Other people, when they could not comprehend a thing, had often a resource in saying, 'But, after all, perhaps it's a lie.' *I* had no such resource. A lie was impossible in a man that descended upon earth in the awful shape of four volumes octavo. Such a great man as *that* was an oracle for me, far beyond Dodona or Delphi. The same thing occurs in another form to everybody. Often (you know) — alas! *too* often — one's dear friend talks something, which one scruples to call 'rigmarole,' but which, for the life of one (it becomes necessary to whisper), cannot be comprehended. Well, after puzzling over it for two hours, you say, 'Come, that's enough; two hours is as much time as I can spare in one life for one unintelligibility.' And then, you proceed, in the most tranquil frame of mind, to take coffee as if nothing had happened. The thing does not haunt your sleep: for you say, 'My dear friend, after all, was perhaps unintentionally talking nonsense.' But how if the thing that puzzles you happens to be a phenomenon in the sky or the clouds — something said by nature? Nature never talks nonsense. There's no getting rid of the thing in that

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way. You can't call *that* 'rigmarole.' As to your dear friend, you were sceptical; and the consequence was, that you were able to be tranquil. There was a valve in reserve, by which your perplexity could escape. But as to Nature, you have no scepticism at all; you believe in *her* to a most bigoted extent; you believe every word she says. And that very belief is the cause that you are disturbed daily by something which you cannot understand. Being true, the thing ought to be intelligible. And exactly because it is *not* — exactly because this horrid unintelligibility is denied the comfort of doubt — therefore it is that you are so unhappy. If you could once make up your mind to doubt and to think, 'Oh, as to Nature, I don't believe one word in ten that she says,' then and there you would become as tranquil as when your dearest friend talks nonsense. My purpose, as regarded Baruel, was not tentative, as if presumptuously trying whether I should like to swallow a thing, with an *arrière pensée* that, if not palatable, I might reject it, but simply the preparatory process of a boa-constrictor lubricating the substance offered, whatever it might be, towards its readier deglutition; that result, whether easy or not easy, being one that followed at any rate.

The person, who chiefly introduced me to Baruel, was a lady, a stern lady, and austere, not only in her manners, which made most people dislike her, but also in the character of her understanding and morals — an advantage which made most people afraid of her. Me, however, she treated with unusual indulgence, chiefly, I believe, because I kept her intellectuals in a state of exercise, nearly amounting to persecution. She was just five times my age when our warfare of

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disputation commenced, I being seven, she thirty-five; and she was not quite four times my age when our warfare terminated by sudden separation, I being then ten, and she thirty-eight. This change, by the way, in the multiple that expressed her chronological relations to myself, used greatly to puzzle me; because, as the interval between us had diminished, within the memory of man, so rapidly, that, from being five times younger, I found myself less than four times younger, the natural inference seemed to be, that, in a few years, I should not be younger at all, but might come to be the older of the two; in which case, I should certainly have 'taken my change' out of the airs she continually gave herself on the score of 'experience.' That decisive word 'experience,' was, indeed, always a sure sign to me that I had the better of the argument, and that it had become necessary, therefore, suddenly to pull me up in the career of victory by a violent exertion of authority; as a knight of old, at the very moment when he would else have unhorsed his opponent, was often frozen into unjust inactivity by the king's arbitrary signal for parting the tilters. It was, however, only when very hard pressed that my fair antagonist took this *not* fair advantage in our daily tournaments. Generally, and if I showed any moderation in the assault, she was rather pleased with the sharp rattle of my rolling musketry. Objections she rather liked, and questions, as many as one pleased, upon the *pourquoi*, if one did not go on to *le pourquoi du pourquoi*. *That*, she said, was carrying things too far; excess in anything she disapproved. Now, *there* I differed from her; excess was the thing I doated on. The fun seemed to me only beginning, when she

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asserted that it had already 'over-stepped the limits of propriety.' Ha! those limits, I thought, were soon reached.

But, however much or often I might vault over the limits of propriety, or might seem to challenge both *her* and the Abbé — all this was but anxiety to reconcile my own secret belief in the Abbé, with the arguments for not believing; it was but the form assumed by my earnest desire to see *how* the learned gentleman could be right, whom my intense faith certified beyond all doubt to *be* so, and whom, equally, my perverse logical recusancy whispered to be continually in the wrong. I wished to see my own rebellious arguments, which I really sorrowed over and bemoaned, knocked down like ninepins; shown to be softer than cotton, frailer than glass, and utterly worthless in the eye of reason. All this, indeed, the stern lady assured me that she *had* shown over and over again. Well, it might be so; and to this, at any rate, as a decree of court, I saw a worldly prudence in submitting. But, probably, I must have looked rather grim, and have wished devoutly for one fair turn-up, on Salisbury plain, with herself and the Abbé, in which case my heart told me how earnestly I should pray that they might forever floor *me*, but how melancholy a conviction oppressed my spirits that my destiny was to floor *them*. Victorious, I should find my belief and my understanding in painful schism: beaten and demolished, I should find my whole nature in harmony with itself.

The mysteriousness to me of men becoming partners (and by no means sleeping partners) in a society of which they had never heard; or, again, of one fellow standing at the beginning of a century, and stretching

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out his hand as an accomplice towards another fellow standing at the end of it, without either having known of the other's existence — all *that* did not sharpen the interest of wonder that gathered about the general economy of secret societies. Tertullian's profession of believing things, not *in spite* of being impossible, but *because* they were impossible, is not the extravagance that most people suppose it. There is a deep truth in it. Many are the things which, in proportion as they attract the *highest* modes of belief, discover a tendency to repel belief on that part of the scale which is governed by the lower understanding. And here, as so often elsewhere, the axiom, with respect to extremes meeting, manifests its subtle presence. The highest form of the incredible, is sometimes the initial form of the credible. But the point on which our irreconcilability was greatest, respected the *cui bono* of this alleged conspiracy. What were the conspirators to gain by success? and nobody pretended that they could gain anything by failure. The lady replied — that, by obliterating the light of Christianity, they prepared the readiest opening for the unlimited gratification of their odious appetites and passions. But to this the retort was too obvious to escape anybody, and for me it threw itself into the form of that pleasant story, reported from the life of Pyrrhus the Epirot — viz., that one day, upon a friend requesting to know what ulterior purpose the king might mask under his expedition to Sicily, 'Why after *that* is finished,' replied the king, 'I mean to administer a little correction (very much wanted) to certain parts of Italy, and particularly to that nest of rascals in Latium.' 'And then —' said the friend: 'and then,' said Pyrrhus,

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'next we go for Macedon; and after that job's jobbed, next, of course, for Greece.' 'Which done,' said the friend: 'which done,' interrupted the king, 'as done it shall be, then we're off to tickle the Egyptians.' 'Whom having tickled,' pursued the friend, 'then we,' — 'tickle the Persians,' said the king. 'But after that is done,' urged the obstinate friend, 'whither next?' 'Why, really man, it's hard to say; you give one no time to breathe; but we'll consider the case in Persia, and, until we've settled it, we can crown ourselves with roses, and pass the time pleasantly enough over the best wine to be found in Ecbatana.' 'That's a very just idea,' replied the friend; 'but, with submission, it strikes me that we might do *that* just now, and, at the beginning of all these tedious wars, instead of waiting for their end.' 'Bless me!' said Pyrrhus, 'if ever I thought of *that* before. Why, man, you're a conjurer; you've discovered a mine of happiness. So, here boy, bring us roses and plenty of Cretan wine.' Surely, on the same principle, these French Encyclopédistes, and Bavarian Illuminati, did not need to postpone any jubilees of licentiousness which they promised themselves, to so very indefinite a period as their ovation over the ruins of Christianity. True, the *impulse* of hatred, even though irrational, may be a stronger force for action than any *motive* of hatred, however rational, or grounded in self-interest. But the particular motive relied upon by the stern lady, as the central spring of the anti-Christian movement, being obviously insufficient for the weight which it had to sustain, naturally the lady, growing sensible of this herself, became still sterner; very angry with me; and not quite satisfied, in this instance, with the Abbé.

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Yet, after all, it was not any embittered remembrance of our eternal feuds, in dusting the jacket of the Abbé Baruel, that lost me, ultimately, the favor of this austere lady. All *that* she forgave; and especially because she came to think the Abbé as bad as myself, for leaving such openings to my inroads. It was on a question of politics that our deadliest difference arose, and that my deadliest sarcasm was launched; not against herself, but against the opinion and party which she adopted. I was right, as usually I am; but, on this occasion, must have been, because I stood up as a patriot, intolerant, to frenzy, of all insult directed against dear England; and she, though otherwise patriotic enough, in this instance ranged herself in alliance with a false anti-national sentiment. My sarcasm was not too strong for the case. But certainly I ought to have thought it too strong for the presence of a lady; whom, or any of her sex, on a matter of politics in these days, so much am I changed, I would allow to chase me, like a foot-ball, all round the tropics, rather than offer the least show of resistance. But my excuse was childhood; and, though it may be true, as the reader will be sure to remind me, that she was rapidly growing down to my level in that respect, still she had not quite reached it; so that there was more excuse for me, after all, than for *her*. She was no longer five times as old, or even four; but when she would come down to be two times as old and one time as old, it was hard to say.

Thus I had good reason for remembering my first introduction to the knowledge of Secret Societies, since this knowledge introduced me to the more gloomy knowledge of the strife which gathers in

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clouds over the fields of human life; and to the knowledge of this strife in two shapes, one of which none of us fail to learn — the personal strife which is awakened so eternally by difference of opinion, or difference of interest; the other, which is felt, perhaps, obscurely by all, but distinctly noticed only by the profoundly reflective, viz., the schism — so mysterious to those even who have examined it most — between the human intellect and many undeniable realities of human experience. As to the first mode of strife, I could not possibly forget it; for the stern lady died before we had an opportunity to exchange forgiveness, and *that* left a sting behind. She, I am sure, was a good forgiving creature at heart; and especially she would have forgiven *me*, because it was *my* place (if one only got one's right place on earth) to forgive *her*. Had she even hauled me out of bed with a tackling of ropes in the dead of night, for the mere purpose of reconciliation, I should have said — 'Why, you see, I can't forgive you entirely to-night, because I'm angry when people waken me without notice, but to-morrow morning I certainly will; or, if that won't do, you shall forgive *me*. No great matter *which*, as the conclusion must be the same in either case, viz. to kiss and be friends.'

But the other strife, which perhaps sounds metaphysical in the reader's ears, then first wakened up to my perceptions, and never again went to sleep amongst my perplexities. Oh, Cicero! my poor, thoughtless Cicero! in all your shallow metaphysics, not once did you give utterance to such a bounce as when you asserted, that never yet did human reason say one thing, and Nature say another. On the contrary, every

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part of Nature — mechanics, dynamics, morals, metaphysics, and even pure mathematics — are continually giving the lie flatly by their facts and conclusions to the very necessities and laws of the human understanding. Did the reader ever study the *Antinomies* of Kant? If not, he has read nothing. Now, *there* he will have the pleasure of seeing a set of quadrilles or reels, in which old Mother Reason amuses herself by dancing to the right and left two variations of blank contradiction to old Mother Truth, both variations being irrefragable, each variation contradicting the other, each contradicting the equatorial reality, and each alike (though past all denial) being a lie. But he need not go to Kant for this. Let him look as one having eyes for looking, and everywhere the same perplexing phenomenon occurs. And this first dawned upon myself in the Baruel case. As Nature is to the human intellect, so was Baruel to mine. We all believe in Nature without limit, yet hardly understand a page amongst her innumerable pages. I believed in Baruel by necessity, and yet everywhere my understanding mutinied against *his*.

But in Baruel I had heard only of Secret Societies that were consciously formed for mischievous ends; or if not always for a distinct purpose of evil, yet always in a spirit of malignant contradiction and hatred. Soon I read of other Societies even more secret, that watched over *truth* dangerous to publish or even to whisper, like the sleepless dragons that Oriental fable associated with the subterraneous guardianship of regal treasures. The secrecy, and the reasons for the secrecy, were alike sublime. The very image, unveiling itself by unsteady glimpses, of men linked

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by brotherly love and perfect confidence, meeting in secret chambers, at the noontide of night, to shelter, by muffling, with their own persons interposed, and at their own risk, some solitary lamp of truth — sheltering it from the carelessness of the world, and its stormy ignorance — this would soon have blown it out — sheltering it from the hatred of the world, that would soon have found out its nature, and made war upon its life — *that* was superhumanly sublime. The fear of those men was sublime — the courage was sublime — the stealthy, thief-like means were sublime — the audacious end, viz. to change the kingdoms of earth, was sublime. If they acted and moved like cowards, those men were sublime: if they planned with the audacity of martyrs, those men were sublime — not less as cowards, not more as martyrs; for the cowardice that appeared above, and the courage that lurked below, were parts of the same machinery.

But another feature of sublimity, which it surprises one to see so many coarse-minded men unaware of, lies in the self-perpetuation and phœnix-like defiance to mortality of such Societies. This feature it is that throws a grandeur even on a humbug, of which there have been many examples, and two in particular, which I am soon going to memorialize. Often and often have men of finer minds felt this secret spell of grandeur, and labored to embody it in external forms. There was a phœnix-club once in Oxford, (up and down Europe there have been several,) that by its constitution grasped not only at the sort of immortality aspired after by Phœnix Insurance offices, viz. a legal or notional perpetuation, liable merely to no *practical* interruptions as regarded paying, and *à fortiori* as

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regarded receiving money, but otherwise fast asleep every night like other dull people — far more faithful, literal, intense, was the realization in *this* case of an undying life. Such a condition as a '*sede vacante*,' which is a condition expressed in the constitutions of all other societies, was impossible in this for any office whatever. That great case was realized, which has since been described by Chateaubriand as governing the throne of France and its successions. '*His Majesty is dead!*' shouts a voice, and this seems to argue, at least, a moment's interregnum: not at all; not a moment's: the thing is impossible: simultaneous (and not successive) is the breath that ejaculates, '*May the King live forever!*' The birth and the death, the rising and the setting, syncronize by a metaphysical nicety of neck-and-neck, inconceivable to the book-keepers of earth. These wretched men imagine that the second rider's foot cannot possibly be in the stirrup until the first rider's foot is out. If the one event occurs in moment M, the other they think must occur in moment N. That may be as regards stirrups, but not as regards metaphysics. I admit that the guard of a mail-coach cannot possibly leave the post-office *before* the coachman, but upon the whole a little after him. Such base rules, however, find themselves compelled to give way in presence of great metaphysicians. In whose science, as I stoop to inform book-keepers, the effect, if anything, goes rather ahead of the cause. Now that Oxford club arose on these sublime principles: no disease like intermitting pulse was known *there*. No fire, but Vestal fire, was used for boiling the tea-kettle. The rule was — that, if once entered upon the *matricula* of this

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amaranthine club, thenceforwards, come from what zone of the earth you would — come without a minute's notice — send up your card — Mr. O. P., from the Anthropophagi — Mr. P. O., from the men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders — instantly you were shown in to the sublime presence. You were not limited to any particular century. Nay, by the rigor of the theory, you had your own choice of millennium. Whatever might be convenient to you, was convenient to the club. The constitution of the club assumed, that, in every successive generation, as a matter of course, a President duly elected (or his authorized delegate) would be found in the chair: scornfully throwing the *onus* of proof to the contrary upon the presumptuous reptile that doubted it. Public or private calamity signified not. The President reverberated himself through a long sinking fund of Surrogates and Vice-Presidents. There, night and day, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, sat the august man, looking as grim as the *Princeps Senatûs* amongst the Conscript Fathers of Rome, when the Gauls entered on the errand of cutting their throats. If *you* entered this club on the very same errand, the President was backed to a large amount to keep his seat until his successor had been summoned. Suppose the greatest of revolutions to have passed over the island during your absence abroad; England, let us say, has even been conquered by a polished race of Hottentots. Very good: an accomplished Hottentot will then be found seated in the chair; you will be allowed to kiss Mr. President's black paw; and will understand that, although *farewells* might be common enough as regarded individual members, yet

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by the eternal laws of this eternal club, the word *adjournment* for the whole concern was a word so unreasonable, as not to be uttered without risk of massacre.

The same principle in man's nature, the everlasting instinct for glorifying the everlasting, the impulse for petrifying the fugitive, and arresting the transitory, which shows itself in ten thousand forms, has also, in this field of secret confederations, assumed many grander forms. To strive after a conquest over Time the conqueror, is already great, in whatsoever direction. But it is still greater when it applies itself to objects that are *per se* immortal, and mortal only as respects their alliance with man. Glorification of heaven — litanies, chanted day and night by adoring hearts — these will doubtless ascend forever from this planet. That result is placed out of hazard, and needs not the guarantee of princes. Somewhere, from some climate, from some lips, such a worship will not cease to rise. But, let a man's local attachments be what they may, he must sigh to think that no assignable spot of ground on earth, that no nation, that no family, enjoys any absolute privilege in that respect. No land, whether continent or island — nor race, whether freemen or slaves, can claim any fixed inheritance, or indefeasible heirlooms of truth. Yet, for that very reason, men of deep piety have but the more earnestly striven to bind down, and chain their own conceptions of truth within the models of some unchanging establishments, even as the Greek Pagans of old chained down their gods[1] from deserting them; have striven to train the vagrant water-brooks of Wisdom, lest she might desert the region altogether, into the channels

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of some local homestead; to connect, with a fixed succession of descendants, the conservation of religion; to root, as one would root a forest that is to flourish through ages, a heritage of ancient truth in the territorial heritage of an ancient household. That sounds to some ears like the policy that founded monastic institutions. Whether so or not, it is not necessarily Roman Catholic. The same policy — the same principle — the sighing after peace and the image of perpetuity — have many times moulded the plans of *Protestant* families. Such families, with monastic imaginations linked to Protestant hearts, existed numerously in England through the reign of the First James and Charles — families amongst the gentry, or what on the Continent would be called the lower nobility, that remembered with love the solemn ritual and services of the Romish Church; but with *this* love combined the love of Protestant doctrines. Amongst these families, and distinguished amongst them, was that of the Farrers.[2] The name of their patrimonial estate was Little Gidding, and, I think, in the county of Hertford. They were, by native turn of mind, and by varied accomplishments, a most interesting family. In some royal houses of Europe it was once a custom, that every son, if not every daughter, should learn a trade. This custom subsisted down to the days of the unhappy Louis XVI., who was a locksmith; and I was once assured by a Frenchman, who knew him well, not so bad a one, considering (you know) that one cannot be as rough as might be wished in scolding a locksmith that one is obliged to address as 'your majesty.' A majestic locksmith has a sort of right to be a bad one. The Farrers adopted this custom, and

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most of them chose the trade of a bookbinder. Why this was a good trade to choose, I will explain in a brief digression. It is a reason which applies only to three other trades, viz: to coining, to printing books, and to making gold or silver plate. And the reason is this — all the four arts stand on an isthmus, connecting them, on one side, with merely mechanic crafts, on the other side, with the Fine Arts. This was the marking distinction between the coinages of ancient classical days and our own. Our European and East Indian coins are the basest of all base products from rude barbaresque handicraft. They are imagined by the man, some horrid Cyclops, who conceived the great idea of a horseshoe, a poker, and a tenpenny nail. Now, the ancient coins were modelled by the same immortal artists that conceived their exquisite *gems*, the cameos and intaglios, which you may buy, in Tassie's Sulphurs, at a few shillings each, or for much less in the engraved *Glyptothecæ*. But, as to coining, our dear lady the Queen (God bless her!) is so avaricious, that she will have it all to herself. She taboos it. She won't let you or me into the smallest share of the business; and she lags us if we poach. That is what *I* call monopoly. And I do wish her Majesty would be persuaded to read a ship-load of political economists that I could point out, on the ruinous consequences of that vice, which, otherwise, it may be feared nobody ever will read. After coining, the next best trade is Printing. This, also, might approach to a Fine Art. When entering the twilight of dotage, reader, I mean to have a printing-press in my own study. I shall print some immaculate editions, as farewell keepsakes, for distribution amongst people that I

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love; but rich and rare must be the gems on which *I* shall condescend to bestow this manual labor. I mean, also, to print a spelling-book for the reader's use. As it seems that he reads, he surely ought to spell. I hope he will not be offended. If he *is*, and dreadfully, viewing it as the most awful insult that man could offer to his brother man, in that case he might bequeath it by will to his possible grandson. Two generations might wash out the affront. Or if he accepts, and furnishes me with his name, I will also print on a blank leaf the good old ancestral legend — 'A. B., *his* book, Heaven grant him grace therein to look.' As to Plate-making, it seems to rank with mechanic baseness; you think not of the sculptor, the chaser, and their exquisite tools, but of Sheffield, Birmingham, Glasgow, sledge-hammers, and pincers. It seems to require no art. I think I could make a dessert spoon myself. Yet the openings which it offers are vast, wherever wealth exists, for the lovelier conceptions of higher art. Benvenuto Cellini — what an artist was *he!* There are some few of his most exquisite works in this country, which may be seen by applying in the right quarters. Judge of him by these, and not by his autobiography. There he appears as a vain, ostentatious man.[3] One would suppose, to hear *him* talk, that nobody ever executed a murder but himself. His own are tolerable, that's all you can say; but not one of them is first-rate, or to be named on the same day with the Pope's attempt at murdering Cellini himself, which must command the unqualified approbation of the connoisseur. True, the Papal attempt did not succeed, and most of Cellini's *did*. What of *that?* Who but idiots judge by the event? Much, therefore, as I

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condemn the man's vanity, and the more so because he claims some murders that too probably were none of *his* (not content with exaggerating his own, he absolutely pirated other men's murders!) yet, when you turn from this walk of art, in which he practised only as an *amateur*, to his *orféverie* — then you feel the interval that divides the *charlatan* from the man of exquisite genius. As a murderer, he was a poor creature; as an artist in gold, he was inimitable. Finally, there remains *Book-binding*, of which also one may affirm, that, being usually the vilest of handicrafts, it is susceptible of much higher effects in the enrichments, tooling, architecture, heraldic emblazonries, &c. This art Mr. Farrer selected for his trade. He had travelled on foot through Spain; and I should think it not impossible that he had *there* seen some magnificent specimens of book-binding. For I was once told, though I have not seen it mentioned in any book, that a century before the date of Farrer's travels, Cardinal Ximenes, when printing his great Complutensian Bible, gave a special encouragement to a new style of binding — fitted for harmonizing with the grandeur of royal furniture, and the carved enrichments of gothic libraries.[4] This, and the other accomplishments which the Farrers had, they had in perfection. But the most remarkable trait in the family character, was the exaltation of their devotional feelings. Had it not been for their benignity and humility, they might have been thought gloomy and ascetic. Something there was, as in thoughtful minds left to a deep rural solitude there is likely to be, of La Trappism and Madame Guyon Quietism. A nun-like aspiration there was in the females after purity and oblivion of earth: in Mr.

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Farrer, the head of the family, a devotional energy, put forth in continual combat with the earthly energies that tempted him away to the world, and with all that offered itself under the specious name of public usefulness. In this combination of qualities arose the plan which the family organized for a system of perpetual worship. They had a family chapel regularly consecrated, as so many families of their rank still have in England. They had an organ: they had means of forming a choir. Gradually the establishment was mounted: the appointments were completed: the machinery was got into motion. How far the plan was ever effectually perfected, would be hard to say. The increasing ferment of the times, until the meeting of the Long Parliament in November, 1640, and in less than two years after *that*, the opening of the great civil war must have made it absolutely impossible to adhere systematically to any scheme of that nature, which required perfect seclusion from worldly cares within the mansion, and public tranquillity outside. Not to mention that the Farrers had an extra source of molestation at that period, when Puritanism was advancing rapidly to a domineering station of power, in the public suspicions which unjustly (but not altogether unplausibly) taxed them with Popish leanings. A hundred years later, Bishop Butler drew upon himself at Durham the very same suspicion, and in some degree by the very same act, viz. by an adoption of some pious symbols, open undeniably to the whole Catholic family of Christian Churches, and yet equivocal in their meaning, because popularly appropriated from old associations of habit to the use of Popish communities. Abstracting, however, from the violent

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disturbances of those stormy times in the way of all religious schemes, we may collect that the scheme of the Farrers was — that the chapel services should be going on, by means of successive 'reliefs' as in camps, or of 'watches' as at sea, through every hour of the day and the night, from year to year, from childhood to old age. Come when you might, come in the dawning, come in the twilight, come at noonday, come through silent roads in the dead of night, always you were to be sure of hearing, through the woods of Little Gidding, the blair of the organ, or the penitential wail of the solitary choristers, or the glad triumphant burst of the full choir in jubilation. There was some affinity in Mr. Farrer's mind to the Spanish peculiarities, and the Spanish modes of grandeur; awful prostration, like Pascal's before the divine idea; gloom that sought to strengthen itself by tenfold involution in the night of solitary woods; exaggerated impressions (if such impressions *could* be exaggerated) of human wretchedness, and a brooding sense of some unknown illimitable grandeur — a sense that could sustain itself at its natural level, only by eternal contemplation of objects that had no end.

Mr. Farrer's plan for realizing a vestal fire, or something beyond it, viz. a *secrecy* of truth, burning brightly in darkness — and, secondly, a *perpetuity* of truth — did not succeed; as many a noble scheme, that men never heard of, has been swept away in its infancy by the ruins of flood, fire, earthquake, which also are forgotten no less completely than what they ruined. Thank Heaven for that! If the noble is often crushed suddenly by the ignoble, one forgetfulness travels after both. The wicked earthquake is

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forgotten not less than the glorious temples which it ruined. Yet the Farrer plan has repeatedly succeeded and prospered through a course of centuries, and for purposes of the same nature. But the strange thing is, (which already I have noticed,) that the general principle of such a plan has succeeded most memorably when applied to purposes of humbug. The two best known of all Secret Societies, that ever *have* been, are the two most extensive monuments of humbug on the one side and credulity on the other. They divide themselves between the ancient world and the modern. The great and illustrious humbug of ancient history was, THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES. The great and illustrious humbug of modern history, of the history which boasts a present and a future, as well as a past, is FREEMASONRY. Let me take a few liberties with both.

The Eleusinian humbug was for centuries the opprobrium of scholars. Even in contemporary times it *was* such. The greatest philosopher, or polyhistor, of Athens or of Rome, could no more tell you the secret — the *to oporeton* (unless he had been initiated, in which case he *durst* not tell it) — than I can. In fact, if you come to *that*, perhaps I myself *can* tell it. The ancient philosopher would retort, that we of these days are in the same predicament as to our own humbug — the Freemasons. No, no, my friend, you're wrong *there*. We know all about that humbug, as I mean to show you. But for what we know of Eleusis and its mummeries, which is quite enough for all practical purposes, we are indebted to none of you ancients, but entirely to modern sagacity. Is not *that* shocking, that a hoax should first be unmasked when it has been

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defunct for fifteen hundred years? The interest which attaches to the Eleusinian shows, is not properly an interest in *them*, but an alien interest in accidents indirectly connected with them. Secret there was virtually none; but a mystery at length begins to arise — how it was that this distressing secret, viz. of there being no secret at all, could, through so many generations, pass down in religious conservation of itself from all profane curiosity of outside barbarians. There was an endless file of heroes, philosophers, statesmen, all hoaxed, all of course incensed at being hoaxed, and yet not one of them is known to have blabbed. A great modern poet, musing philosophically on the results amongst the mob 'in Leicester's busy square,' from looking through a showman's telescope at the moon, is surprised at the crowd of spectators going off with an air of disappointment:

> 'One after one they turn aside; nor have I one espied,
> That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.'

Yes, but I can tell him the reason of that. The fact is, a more pitiful sight for sight-seers, than our own moon, does not exist. The first man that showed *me* the moon through a glass of any power, was a distinguished professor of astronomy. I was so incensed with the hoax (as it seemed) put upon me — such a weak, watery, wicked old harridan, substituted for the pretty creature I had been used to see — that I marched up to him with the angry design of demanding my half-crown back again, until a disgusting remembrance came over me, that, being a learned professor, the showman could not possibly have taken any half-crown, which fact also destroyed all ground of action

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against him as obtaining money under false pretences. I contented myself therefore with saying, that, until he showed me the man in the moon, with his dog, lantern, and bundle of thorns, I must decline corroborating his fancy of being able to exhibit the real old original moon and no mistake. Endymion never could have had such a sweetheart as *that*. Let the reader take my advice, not to seek familiarity with the moon. Familiarity breeds contempt.

It is certain that, like the travellers through 'Leicester's busy square,' all the visiters of Eleusis must have abominated the hoax put upon them —

> ——————'nor have I *one* espied,
> That did not slackly walk away, as if dissatisfied.'

See now the different luck of hoaxers in this world. Joseph Ady is smoked pretty nearly by the whole race of man. The Continent is, by this time, wide awake; Belgium has refused to take in his letters; and the cruel Lord Mayor of London has threatened to indict Joe for a fraud, value twopence, by reason of the said Joe having seduced his lordship into opening an unpaid letter, which was found to contain nothing but an invitation from 'yours respectfully' — not to a dinner party — but to an early remittance of one pound, for reasons subsequently to be disclosed. I should think, but there's no knowing, that there might be a chance still for Joe, (whom, really one begins to pity, as a persecuted man — cruising, like the Flying Dutchman, through seas that have all closed their ports,) in Astrachan, and, perhaps, in Mecca. Some business might be done, for a few years, in Timbuctoo; and an opening there would undoubtedly be found for a connection with

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Abd-el-Kader, if only any opening could be found *to* Abd-el-Kader through the French lines. Now, on the other hand, the goddess and her establishment of hoaxers at Eleusis, did a vast 'stroke of business' for more than six centuries, without any 'unpleasantries' [5] occurring; no cudgels shaken in the streets, little incidents that custom (by making too familiar) has made contemptible to the philosophy of Joe; no round robbins, signed by the whole main-deck of the academy or the porch; no prætors or lord mayors threatening actions *repetundarum*, and mourning over twopences that had gone astray. 'Misfortune acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows;' and the common misfortune of having been hoaxed, lowers the proudest and the humblest into a strange unanimity, for once, of pocketing their wrongs in silence. Eleusis, with her fine bronzed face, might say proudly and laughingly — 'Expose *me*, indeed! — why, I hoaxed this man's great-grandfather, and I trust to hoax his great-grandson; all generations of his house *have* been or *shall* be hoaxed, and afterwards grateful to me for not exposing that fact of the hoax at their private expense.'

There is a singularity in this case, of the same kind as that stratagem, (but how prodigiously exceeded in its scale,) imperfectly executed on the Greek leaders by the Persian satrap Tissaphernes, but perfectly, in one or two cases, amongst the savage islands of the South Seas, upon European crews, when one victim, having first been caught, has been used as the means of trepanning all his comrades in succession. Each successive novice has been tamed, by terror, into an instrument for decoying other novices from A *to*

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Z. Next, after this feature of interest about the Eleusinian *Teletai*, is another which modern times have quickened and developed, viz., the gift of enormous nonsense, the inspiration of nonsense, which the enigma of these mysteries has been the fortunate means of blowing into the brains of various able men. It requires such men, in fact, to succeed as speculators in nonsense. None but a man of extraordinary talents can write first-rate nonsense. Perhaps the prince of all men, ever formed by nature and education, for writing superior nonsense, was Warburton. The natural vegetation of his intellect tended to that kind of fungus which is called 'crotchet;' so much so, that if he had a just and powerful thought, (as sometimes he had,) or even a wise and beautiful thought, or even a grand one, by the mere perversity of his tortuous brain, it was soon digested into a crotchet. This native tendency of his was cultured and watered, for years, by his practice as an attorney. Making him a bishop was, perhaps, a mistake; it certainly stunted the growth of special pleading, perhaps ruined the science; on the other hand, it saved the twelve judges of that day from being driven mad, as they would have been by this Hermes Trismegistus, this born Titan, in the realms of *La Chicane*. Some fractions of the *virus* descended through the Warburtonian commentaries upon Pope, &c., corroding the flesh to the very bones, wherever it alighted. But the Centaur's shirt of W.'s malignity was destined for the Hebrew lawgiver, and all that could be made to fall within that field. Did my reader ever read the 'Divine Legation of Moses'? Is he aware of the mighty syllogism, that single block

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of granite, such as you can see nowhere but at St. Petersburg, on which that elaborate work reposes? There is a Welsh bridge, near Llanroost, the birth-place of Inigo Jones, built by that architect with such exquisite skill, that the people astonished me (but the people were two milkmaids), by protesting that invariably a little breeze-footed Camilla, of three years old, in running across, caused the bridge to tremble like a guilty thing. So admirable was the equilibrium, that an infant's foot disturbed it. Unhappily, Camilla had sprained her ancle at that time, so that the experiment could not be tried; and the bridge to me seemed not guilty at all, (to judge by its trembling,) but as innocent as Camilla herself. Now, Warburton must have sought to rival the Welsh *pontifex* in this particular test of architectural skill; for his syllogism is so divinely poised, that if you shake this key-stone of his great arch, (as you certainly may,) then you will become aware of a vibration — of a nervous tremor — running through the entire dome of his divine legation; you are absolutely afraid of the dome coming down with yourself in the centre; just as the Llanroost bridge used to be near going into hysterics when the light-footed Camilla bounded across it. This syllogism, on account of its connection with the Eleusinian hoax, I will rehearse: it is the very perfection of a crotchet. Suppose the *major* proposition to be this: That no religion, unless through the advantage of divine inspiration, could dispense with the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Suppose the *minor* proposition this: That the Mosaic religion *did* dispense with that doctrine. Then the conclusion will be — *ergo*, the Mosaic religion was divinely inspired. The

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monstrous tenor of this argument made it necessary to argue most elaborately that all the false systems of false and cruel religions were affectionately anxious for maintaining the doctrine of a future state; but, 2dly, that the only true faith and the only pure worship were systematically careless of that doctrine. Of course it became necessary to show, *inter alia*, that the Grecian States and lawgivers maintained officially, as consecrated parts of the public religion, the doctrine of immortality as valid for man's expectations and fears; whilst at Jerusalem, at Hebron, on Mount Sinai, this doctrine was slighted. Generally speaking, a lie is a hard thing to establish. The Bishop of Gloucester was forced to tax his resources as an artist, in building palaces of air, not less than ever Inigo Jones before him in building Whitehall or St. Vitus's bridge at Llanroost. Unless he could prove that Paganism fought hard for this true doctrine, then by his own argument Paganism would be found true. Just as, inversely, if he failed to prove that Judaism countenanced the false doctrine, Judaism would itself be found false. Whichever favored the false, was true; whichever favored the true was false. There's a crotchet for you, reader, round and full as any prize turnip ever yet crowned with laurels by great agricultural societies! I suspect that, in Homeric language, twice nine of such degenerate men as the reader and myself could not grow such a crotchet as that!

The Bishop had, therefore, to prove — it was an obligation self-created by his own syllogism — that the Pagan religion of Greece, in some great authorized institution of the land, taught and insisted on the doctrine of a future state as the basis on which all

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legal ethics rested. This great doctrine he had to suspend as a chandelier in his halls of Pagan mythology. A pretty chandelier for a Christian Bishop to be chaining to the roof and lighting up for the glory of heathenism! Involuntarily one thinks of Aladdin's impious order for a roc's egg, the egg of the very deity whom the slave of the lamp served, to hang up in his principal saloon. The Bishop found his chandelier, or fancied he had found it, in the old lumber garrets of Eleusis. He knew, he could prove, what was taught in the Eleusinian shows. Was the Bishop ever there? No: but what of that? He could read through a milestone. And Virgil, in his 6th Æneid, had given the world a poetic account of the *Teletai*, which the Bishop kindly translated and expanded into the truth of absolute prose. The doctrine of immortality, he insisted, was the chief secret revealed in the mysteries. And thus he proved decisively that, because it taught a capital truth, Paganism must be a capital falsehood. It is impossible to go within a few pages into the innumerable details. Sufficient it would be for any casual reader to ask, if this were the very hinge of all legislative ethics in Greece, how it happened that it was a matter of pure fancy or accident whether any Greek, or even any Athenian, were initiated or not; 2dly, how the Bishop would escape the following dilemma — if the supposed doctrine were advanced merely as an opinion, one amongst others, then what authority did it draw from Eleusis? If, on the other hand, Eleusis pretended to some special argument for immortality, how came it that many Greek and some Roman philosophers, who had been introduced at Eleusis, or had even ascended to the

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highest degree of μυησις, did not, in discussing this question, refer to that secret proof which, though not privileged to develop, they might safely have built upon as a postulate amongst initiated brothers? An opinion ungrounded was entitled to no weight even in the mobs of Eleusis — an argument upon good grounds must have been often alluded to in philosophic schools. Neither could a nation of holy cowards, trembling like the bridge at Llanroost, have had it in their power to intercept the propagation of such a truth. The 47th of Euclid I. *might* have been kept a secret by fear of assassination, because no man could communicate *that* in a moment of intoxication; if his wife, for instance, should insist on his betraying the secret of that proposition, he might safely tell her — not a word would she understand or remember; and the worst result would be, that she would box his ears for imposing upon her. I once heard a poor fellow complain, that, being a Freemason, he had been led the life of a dog by his wife, as if *he* were Samson and *she* were Delilah, with the purpose of forcing him to betray the Masonic secret and sign: and these, he solemnly protested to us all, that he *had* betrayed most regularly and faithfully whenever he happened to be drunk. But what did he get for his goodness? All the return he ever had for the kindness of this invariable treachery was a word, too common, I regret to say, in female lips, viz. *fiddle-de-dee:* and he declared, with tears in his eyes, that peace for *him* was out of the question, until he could find out some plausible falsehood that might prove more satisfactory to his wife's mind than the truth. Now the Eleusinian secret, if it related to the immortality of the soul, could not

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have the protection of obscurity or complex involution. If it had, then it could not have been intelligible to mobs: if it had *not*, then it could not have been guarded against the fervor of confidential conversation. A very subtle argument could not have been communicated to the multitudes that visited the shows — a very popular argument would have passed a man's lips, in the ardor of argument, before he would himself be aware of it.

But all this is superfluous. Let the reader study the short essay of Lobeck on this subject, forming one section in three of his *Aglaophamus*, and he will treat, with derision, all the irrelevant skirmishing, and the vast roars of artillery pointed at shadows, which amuse the learned, but disgust the philosophic in the 'Divine Legation.' Much remains to be done that Lobeck's rustic seclusion denied him the opportunities for doing;[6] much that can be done effectually only in great libraries. *But* I return to my assertion, that the most memorable of all Secret Societies was the meanest. That the Society which made more people hold their tongues than ever the Inquisition did, or the mediæval Vehm-gericht, was a hoax; nay, except Freemasonry, the hoax of hoaxes.

PART II.

Has the modern world no hoax of its own, answering to the Eleusinian mysteries of Grecian days? Oh, yes, it has. I have a very bad opinion of the ancient world; and it would grieve me if such a world

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could be shown to have beaten us even in the quality of our hoaxes. I have, also, not a very favorable opinion of the *modern* world. But I dare say that in fifty thousand years it will be considerably improved; and, in the meantime, if we are not quite so good or so clever as we ought to be, yet still we are a trifle better than our ancestors; I hope we are up to a hoax any day. A man must be a poor creature that can't invent a hoax. For two centuries we have had a first-rate one; and its name is *Freemasonry*. Do you know the secret, my reader? Or shall I tell you? Send me a consideration, and I will. But stay, the weather being so fine, and philosophers, therefore, so good-tempered, I'll tell it you for nothing, whereas, if you become a mason, you must pay for it. Here is the secret. When the novice is introduced into the conclave of the Freemasons, the grand-master looks very fierce at him, and draws his sword, which makes the novice look very melancholy, as he is not aware of having had time as yet for any profaneness, and fancies, therefore, that somebody must have been slandering him. Then the grand-master, or his deputy, cites him to the bar, saying, 'What's *that* you have in your pocket?' To which the novice replies, 'A guinea.' 'Anything more?' 'Another guinea.' 'Then,' replies the official person in a voice of thunder, 'Fork out.' Of course to a man coming sword-in-hand few people refuse to do *that*. This forms the first half of the mysteries; the second half, which is by much the more interesting, consists entirely of brandy. In fact, this latter mystery forms the reason, or final cause, for the elder mystery of the *Forking out*. But how did I learn all this so ac-

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curately? Isn't a man liable to be assassinated, if he betrays that ineffable mystery or *απορρητο* of masonry, which no wretch but one since King Solomon's day is reputed ever to have blabbed? And perhaps, reader, the wretch did'nt blab the whole; he only got as far as the *Forking out;* and being a churl who grudged his money, he ran away before reaching the *brandy.* So that this fellow, if he seems to you but half as guilty as myself, on the other hand is but half as learned. It's better for you to stick by the guiltier man. And yet, on consideration, I am not so guilty as we have both been thinking. Perhaps it was a mistake. Dreaming on days far back, when I was scheming for an introduction to the honorable society of masons, and of course to their honorable secret, with the single-minded intention of instantly betraying that secret to a dear female friend (and, you see, in honor it was not possible for me to do otherwise, because she had made me promise that I *would*) — all this time I was soothing my remorse with a belief that woman was answerable for my treachery, she having positively compelled me to undertake it. When suddenly I woke into a bright conviction that all was a dream; that I had never been near the Freemasons; that I had treacherously evaded the treachery which I ought to have committed, by perfidiously forging a secret quite as good, very likely better, than that which I was pledged in honor to betray; and that, if anybody had ground of complaint against myself, it was not the grand-master, sword-in-hand, but my poor ill-used female friend, so confiding, so amiably credulous in my treachery, so cruelly deceived, who had swallowed a mendacious account of Freemasonry forged by myself, the same which, I

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greatly fear that, on looking back, I shall find myself to have been palming, in this very page, upon the much respected reader. Seriously, however, the whole bubble of Freemasonry was shattered in a paper which I myself once threw into a London journal about the year 1823 or '4. It was a paper in this sense mine, that from me it had received form and arrangement; but the materials belonged to a learned German, viz. Buhle, the same (Ebelison) that edited the 'Bipont Aristotle,' and wrote a history of philosophy. No German has any conception of style. I therefore did him the favor to wash his dirty face, and make him presentable amongst Christians; but the substance was drawn entirely from this German book. It was there established, that the whole hoax of masonry had been invented in the year 1629 by one Andrea; and the reason that this exposure could have dropped out of remembrance, is, probably, that it never reached the public ear: partly because the journal had a limited circulation; but much more because the *title* of the paper was not so constructed as to indicate its object. A title, which seemed to promise only a discussion of masonic doctrines, must have repelled everybody; whereas, it ought to have announced (what in fact it accomplished) the utter demolition of the whole masonic edifice. At this moment I have not space for an abstract of that paper; but it was conclusive; and hereafter, when I have strengthened it by facts since noticed in my own reading, it may be right to place it more effectually before the public eye.

Finally, I will call the reader's attention to the most remarkable by far of all secret societies ever heard of, and for this reason, that it suddenly developed the

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most critical wisdom in a dreadful emergency; secondly, the grandest purpose; and, lastly, with entire success. The purpose was, to protect a jewel by hiding it from all eyes, whilst it navigated a sea swarming with enemies. The critical wisdom was the most remarkable evidence ever given by the primitive Christians of that serpent's subtlety which they had been warned to combine with the innocence of the dove. The success was, the victory of the Christian church over the armies that waylaid its infancy. Without falsehood, without shadow of falsehood, all the benefits of falsehood — the profoundest — were secured. Without need to abjure anything, all that would have raised a demoniac yell for instant abjuration was suddenly hidden out of sight. In noonday the Christian Church was suddenly withdrawn behind impenetrable veils, even as the infant Christ himself was caught up to the secrecies of Egypt and the wilderness from the bloody wrath of Herod. And whilst the enemies of this infant society were roaming round them on every side, seeking for them, walking upon their very traces, absolutely touching them, or divided from their victims only as children in bed have escaped from murderers in thick darkness, sheltered by no screen but a muslin curtain; all the while the inner principle of the church lurked as in the cell at the centre of a labyrinth. Was the hon. reader ever in a real labyrinth, like that described by Herodotus? We have all been in labyrinths of doubt, labyrinths of error, labyrinths of metaphysical nonsense. But I speak of literal labyrinths. Now, at Bath, in my labyrinthine childhood, there was such a mystery. This mystery I used to visit; and I can assert that no type

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ever flashed upon my mind so pathetically shadowing out the fatal irretrievability of early errors in life. Turn but wrong at first entering the thicket, and all was over; you were ruined; no wandering could recover the right path. Or suppose you even took the right turn at first, what of that? You couldn't expect to draw a second prize; five turnings offered very soon after; your chance of escaping error was now reduced to one-fifth of unity; and supposing that again you draw no blank, not very far had you gone before fourteen roads offered. What remained for you to do *now?* Why, if you were a wise man, to lie down and cry. None but a presumptuous fool would count upon drawing for a third time a prize, and such a prize as one amongst fourteen. I mention all this, I recall this image of the poor Sidney Labyrinth, whose roses, I fear, must long ago have perished, betraying all the secrets of the mysterious house, simply to teach the stranger how secure is the heart of a labyrinth. Gibraltar is nothing to it. You may sit in that deep grave-like recess, you may hear distant steps approaching, but laugh at them. If you are coining, and have all the implements of coining round about you, never trouble yourself to hide them. Nobody will in this life ever reach you. Why, it is demonstrable by the arithmetic of combinations, that if a man spent the flower of his life as a police officer in trying to reach your coining-shop, he could not do it; you might rest as in a sanctuary, that is, hidden and inaccessible to those who do not know the secret of the concealment. In that recess you might keep a private still for a century without fear of the exciseman. Light, common daylight, will not show you the stars; on the

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contrary, it hides them; and the brighter this light becomes, the *more* it hides them. Even so, from the exquisite machinery of the earliest Christian society, whatever suspicions might walk about in the darkness, all efforts of fanatical enemies at forcing an entrance within the air-woven gates of these entrenchments were (as the reader will see) utterly thrown away. Round and round the furious Jews must have circumambulated the camp, like the poor gold fish eternally wheeling round his crystal wall, but, after endless cruisings, never nearer to any opening. That concealment for the Christian nursery was absolutely required, because else martyrdom would have come too soon. Martyrdom was good for watering the church, and quickening its harvests; but, at this early stage of advance, it would utterly have extirpated the church. If a voice had been heard from heaven, saying, 'Let there be martyrs,' soon the great answering return would be heard rolling back from earth, 'And there *were* martyrs. But for this there must be time; the fire, to be sure, will never be extinguished, if once thoroughly kindled; but, in this earliest twilight of the primitive faith, the fire is but a little gathering of scanty fuel fanned by human breath, and barely sufficient to show one golden rallying star in all the mighty wilderness.

There was the motive to the Secret Society which I am going to describe? — *there* was its necessity! 'Mask, or you will be destroyed!' was the private signal among the Christians. 'Fall flat on your faces,' says the Arab to the Pilgrims, when he sees the purple haze of the simoom running before the wind. 'Lie down, men,' says the captain to his fusiliers, 'till these

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hurricanes of the artillery be spent.' To hide from the storm during its first murderous explosion, was so absolutely requisite, that, simply from its *sine qua non* necessity, and supposing there were no other argument whatever, I should infer that it had been a fact. Because it *must* have been, therefore (I should say) it *was*. However, do as you like; pray use your own pleasure; consider yourself quite at home amongst my arguments, and kick them about with as little apology as if they were *my* children and servants. What makes me so easy in the matter is, that I use the above argument — though, in my opinion, a strong one — *ex abundanti;* it is one string more than I want to my bow; so I can afford to lose it, even if I lose it unjustly. But, by quite another line of argument, and dispensing with this altogether, I mean to *make* you believe, reader, whether you like it or not.

I once threw together a few thoughts upon this obscure question of the *Essenes*, which thoughts were published at the time in a celebrated journal, and my reason for referring to them here is in connection with a single inappropriate expression since applied to that paper. In a short article on myself in his 'Gallery of Literary Portraits,' Mr. Gilfillan spoke of that little disquisition in terms beyond its merit, and I thank him for his kind opinion. But as to one word, not affecting myself but the subject, I find it a duty of sincerity to dissent from him. He calls the thesis of that paper '*paradoxical*.' Now paradox is a very charming thing, and, since leaving off opium, I take a great deal too much of it for my health. But, in this case, the paradox lies precisely and outrageously in the opposite direction; that is, when used (as the word *paradox*

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commonly is) to mean something that startles by its extravagance. Else I have twice or three times explained in print, for the benefit of my female or non-Grecian readers, that *paradox*, being a purely Greek word, ought strictly to be read by a Grecian light, and then it implies nothing, of necessity, that may not be right. Here follows a rigorous definition of *paradox* in a Greek sense. Not *that* only is paradoxical which, being really false, puts on the semblance of truth; but, secondly, *that*, also, which, being really true, puts on the semblance of falsehood. For, literally speaking, everything is paradoxical which contradicts the public *doxa* (δοξα), that is, contradicts the popular opinion or the public expectation, which may be done by a truth as easily as a falsehood. The very weightiest truths now received amongst men, have nearly all of them, in turn, in some one stage of their development, been found strong paradoxes to the popular mind. Hence it is, viz. in the Grecian sense of the word *paradox* as something extraordinary, but not on that account the less likely to be true, that several great philosophers have published, under the idea and title of *paradoxes*, some first-rate truths on which they desired to fix public attention; meaning, in a short-hand form, to say — 'Here, reader, are some extraordinary truths, looking so very like falsehoods, that you would never take them for anything else if you were not invited to give them a special examination.' Boyle published some elementary principles in hydrostatics as paradoxes. Natural philosophy is overrun with paradoxes. Mathematics, mechanics, dynamics, are all partially infested with them. And in morals the Stoics threw their weightiest doctrines under the rubric of

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paradoxes — a fact which survives to this day in a little essay of Cicero's. To be paradoxical, therefore, is not necessarily to be unphilosophic; and that being so, it might seem as though Mr. Gilfillan had laid me under no obligation to dissent from him; but used popularly, as naturally Mr. Gilfillan meant to use it in that situation, the word certainly throws a reproach of extravagance upon any thought, argument, or speculation, to which it is imputed.

Now it is important for the reader to understand that the very first thing which ever fixed my sceptical eye upon the whole fable of the Essenes, as commonly received amongst Christian churches, was the intolerable extravagance of the received story. The outrageousness — the mere Cyclopian enormity of its paradox — this, and nothing else, it was that first extorted from me, on a July day, one long shiver of horror at the credulity, the bottomless credulity, that could have swallowed such a legend of delirium. Why, Pliny, my excellent Sir, you were a gentleman mixing with men of the highest circles — you were yourself a man of fine and brilliant intellect — a jealous inquirer — and, in extent of science, beyond your contemporaries — how came you, then, to lend an ear, so learned as yours, to two such knaves as your Jewish authorities? For, doubtless, it *was* they, viz. Josephus and Philo-Judæus, that poisoned the Plinian ear. Others from Alexandria would join the cabal, but these vagabonds were the ringleaders. Now there were three reasons for specially distrusting such men, two known equally well to Pliny and me, one separately to myself. Jews had by that time earned the reputation, in Roman literature, of being credulous by preference amongst

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the children of earth. That was one reason; a second was, that all men tainted with intense nationality, and especially if not the gay, amiable, nationality of Frenchmen, but a gloomy unsocial nationality, are liable to suspicion as liars. So much was known to Pliny: and a third thing which was not, I could have told him, viz. that Josephus was the greatest knave in that generation. A learned man in Ireland is at this moment bringing out a new translation of Josephus, which has, indeed, long been wanted; for 'wicked Will Whiston'[7] was a very moderate Grecian — a miserable antiquarian — a coarse writer of English — and at that time of day, in the absence of the main German and English researches on the many questions (chronological or historical) in Syro-Judaic and Egyptian antiquities, had it not within his physical possibilities to adorn the Sparta which chance had assigned him. From what I hear, the history will benefit by this new labor of editorial culture; the only thing to be feared is, that the historian, the bad Josephus, will not be meritoriously scourged. *I, lictor, colliga manus.* One aspect of Josephus and his character occurs to me as interesting, viz. when placed in collision with the character so different, and the position partially the same, of St. Paul. In both, when suddenly detained for inspection at an early stage of their career, we have a bigot of the most intractible quality; and in both the bigotry expressed its ferocity exclusively upon the Christians, as the new-born heretics that troubled the unity of the national church. Thus far the parties agree; and they agree also in being as learned as the limited affinities in their native studies to exotic learning would allow. But from that point, up to which

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the resemblance in position, in education, in temper, is so close, how entirely opposed! Both erring profoundly; yet the one not only in his errors, but *by* his errors showing himself most single-minded, conscientious, fervent, devout; a holy bigot; as incapable of anything mercenary then, of anything insidious, or of compromise with any mode of self-interest, as after the rectification of his views he was incapable of compromise with profounder shapes of error. The other, a time-serving knave, sold to adulation and servile ministries; a pimp; a liar; or ready for any worse office, if worse is named on earth. Never on any human stage was so dramatically realized, as by Josephus in Rome, the delineation of the poet:

* * * *

'A fingering meddling slave;
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave.'

Yes, this master in Israel, this leader of Sanhedrims, went as to a puppet-show, sat the long day through to see a sight. What sight? Jugglers, was it? buffoons? tumblers? dancing dogs? or a reed shaken by the wind? Oh, no! Simply to see his ruined country carried captive in effigy through the city of her conqueror — to see the sword of the Maccabees hung up as a Roman trophy — to see the mysteries of the glorious temple dragged from secrecy before the grooms and gladiators of Rome. Then when this was finished, a woe that would once have caused Hebrew corpses to stir in their graves, he goes home to find his *atrium* made glorious with the monuments of a thousand years that had descended through the princes of Hebrew tribes; and to find his luxury, his

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palace, and his harem, charged as a perpetual tax upon the groans of his brave unsurrendering countrymen, that had been sold as slaves into marble quarries: *they* worked extra hours, that the only traitor to Jerusalem might revel in honor.

When first I read the account of the *Essenes* in Josephus, I leaned back in my seat, and apostrophized the writer thus: — 'Joe, listen to me; you've been telling us a fairy tale; and, for my part, I've no objection to a fairy tale in any situation; because, if one can make no use of it oneself, one always knows a child that will be thankful for it. But this tale, Mr. Joseph, happens also to be a lie; secondly, a fraudulent lie; thirdly, a malicious lie.' It was a fiction of hatred against Christianity. For I shall startle the reader a little when I inform him that, if there were a syllable of truth in the main statement of Josephus, then at one blow goes to wreck the whole edifice of Christianity. Nothing but blindness and insensibility of heart to the *true* internal evidence of Christianity could ever have hidden this from men. Religious sycophants who affect the profoundest admiration, but in their hearts feel none at all, for what they profess to regard as the beauty of the moral revelations made in the New Testament, are easily cheated, and often *have* been cheated, by the grossest plagiarisms from Christianity offered to them as the pure natural growths of paganism. I would engage to write a Greek version somewhat varied and garbled of the Sermon on the Mount, were it hidden in Pompeii, unearthed, and published as a fragment from a posthumous work of a Stoic, with the certain result that very few people indeed should detect in it any signs of forgery. There

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are several cases of that nature actually unsuspected at this hour, which my deep cynicism and detestation of human hypocrisy yet anticipates a banquet of gratification in one day exposing. Oh, the millions of deaf hearts, deaf to everything really impassioned in music, that pretend to admire Mozart! Oh, the worlds of hypocrites who cant about the divinity of Scriptural morality, and yet would never see any lustre at all in the most resplendent of Christian jewels, provided the pagan thief had a little disguised their setting. The thing has been tried long before the case of the *Essenes*, and it takes more than a scholar to detect the imposture. A philosopher, who must also be a scholar, is wanted. The eye that suspects and watches, is needed. Dark seas were those over which the ark of Christianity tilted for the first four centuries; evil men and enemies were cruising, and an Alexandrian Pharos is required to throw back a light broad enough to search and sweep the guilty secrets of those times. The Church of Rome has always thrown a backward telescopic glance of question and uneasy suspicion upon these ridiculous *Essenes*, and has repeatedly come to the right practical conclusion — that they were, and must have been, Christians under some mask or other; but the failure of Rome has been in carrying the Ariadne's thread through the whole labyrinth from centre to circumference. Rome has given the ultimate solution rightly, but has not (in geometrical language) raised the construction of the problem with its conditions and steps of evolution. Shall I tell you, reader, in a brief, rememberable form, what was the crime of the hound Josephus, through this fable of the *Essenes* in relation to Christ? It was the very same crime as

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that of the hound Lauder in relation to Milton. Lauder, about the middle of the last century, bearing deadly malice to the memory of Milton, conceived the idea of charging the great poet with plagiarism. He would greatly have preferred denying the value *in toto* of the 'Paradise Lost.' But, as this was hopeless, the next best course was to say — Well, let it be as grand as you please, it is none of Milton's. And, to prepare the way for this, he proceeded to translate into Latin (but with plausible variations in the expression or arrangement) some of the most memorable passages in the poem. By this means he had, as it were, melted down or broken up the golden sacramental plate, and might now apply it to his own felonious purposes. The false swindling travesty of the Miltonic passage he produced as the undoubted original, professing to have found it in some rare or obscure author, not easily within reach, and then saying — Judge (I beseech you) for yourself, whether Milton were indebted to this passage or not. Now, reader, a falsehood *is* a falsehood, though uttered under circumstances of hurry and sudden trepidation; but certainly it becomes, though not more a falsehood, yet more criminally, and hatefully a falsehood, when prepared from afar and elaborately supported by fraud, and dovetailing into fraud, and having no palliation from pressure and haste. A man is a knave who falsely, but in the panic of turning all suspicion from himself, charges you or me with having appropriated another man's jewel. But how much more odiously is he a knave, if with no such motive of screening himself, if out of pure devilish malice to us, he has contrived in preparation for his own lie to conceal the jewel about our persons

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This was what the wretch Lauder tried hard to do for Milton. This was what the wretch Josephus tried hard to do for Christ. Josephus grew up to be a mature man, about thirty-five years old, during that earliest stage of Christianity, when the divine morality of its founder was producing its first profound impression, through the advantage of a dim religious one, still brooding over the East, from the mysterious death of that founder. I wish that the reader would attend to a thing which I am going to say. In 1839–40 and '41, it was found by our force in Affghanistan that, in a degree much beyond any of the Hindoo races, the Affghan Sirdars and officers of rank were profoundly struck by the beauty of the Evangelists; especially in five or six passages, amongst which were the Lord's Prayer, and the Sermon on the Mount, with one or two Parables. The reason of this was, that the Affghans, though more simple and unpolished than the Hindoos, were also in a far more natural condition of moral feeling being Mahometans, they were much more advanced in their conceptions of Deity; and they had never been polluted by the fearful distractions of the Hindoo polytheism. Now, I am far from insinuating that the Romans of that first Christian era were no further advanced in culture than the Affghans, yet still I affirm that, in many features, both moral and intellectual, these two martial races resembled each other. Both were slow and tenacious (that is adhesive) in their feelings. Both had a tendency to dulness, but for that very reason to the sublime. Mercurial races are never sublime. There were two channels through whom the Palestine of Christ's day communicated with the world outside, viz. the Romans

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of the Roman armies, and the Greek colonists. Syria, under the Syro-Macedonian dynasty; Palestine, under the house of Antipater; and Egypt, under the Ptolemies — were all deluged with Greek emigrants and settlers. Of these two races, the subtle, agile Greek, unprincipled, full of change and levity, was comparatively of little use to Christianity as a centre, waiting and seeking for means of diffusion. Not only were the deeper conscientious instincts of the Romans more suited to a profound religion, as instruments for the radiation of light, but also it is certain that the military condition *per se* supplies some advantages towards a meditative apprehension of vast eternal problems beyond what *can* be supplied by the fractionary life of petty brokerage or commerce. This is also certain, that Rome itself — the idea which predominated in Roman camps — cherished amongst her soldiery, from the very enormities of her state, and from the chaos of her internal life, a tendency to vast fermentations of thought favorable to revolutions in man's internal worlds of feeling and aspirations. Hence it will be found, if once a man's eye is directed into that current, that no classes of people did so much for the propagation of Christianity as the officers of the Roman army, centurions, tribunes, prefects, legates, &c., or as the *aulic* officers, the great ceremonial officers of the imperial court — or as the *aulic* ladies, the great leading ladies that had practically much influence on the ear of Cæsar. The utter dying away of the Roman paganism, which had become quite as powerless to all the accomplished men and women of Rome for any purpose of terror or of momentary consolation as to us English at present the mythology of Faries, left a

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frightful *vacuum* in the mind of Roman grandees — a horror as of voyagers upon some world floating away without helmsman or governor. In this unhappy agitation of spirit, and permanent posture of clamorous demand for light, a *nidus* was already forming for a deep brooding interest in any great spiritual phenomena of breadth and power that might anywhere arise amongst men. Athens was too windy, too conceited, too shallow in feeling, to have been much impressed by the deepest revolutionary movements in religion. But in Rome, besides the far different character of the national mind, there were what may be called *spiritual* horrors arising, which (like dreadful nervous diseases) unfolded terrifically to the experience spiritual capacities and openings beyond what had been suspected. The great domestic convulsions of Rome, the poisonings and assassinations, that gleam so fearfully from the pictures of Juvenal, were beginning about this period. It was not that by any coarse, palpable logic, as dull people understood the case, women or men said — 'Accountability there is none; and we will no longer act as if there were.' Accountability there never *had* been any; but the obscure scene of an order with which all things sympathized, men not less than the wheels of society — this had blindly produced an instinct of corresponding self-control. At present, when the Pagan religion had virtually died out, all secret restraints were breaking up; a general delirium carried, and was felt to carry, a license into all ranks; it was not a negative merely, but a positive change. A religion had collapsed — *that* was negative; a mockery had been exposed — *that* was positive. It was not that restraints were resisted; there were none to resist;

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they had crumbled away spontaneously. What power still acted upon society? Terror from police, and still, as ever, the Divine restraints of love and pity, honor, and domestic affections. But the conscience spoke no longer through any spiritual organs. Just at this moment it was when the confusions of Roman society, the vast expansion of the empire, the sea-like expansion of the mighty capital, the political tendencies of the whole system, were all moving together towards grandeur and distraction of feeling, that the doctrine of *apotheosis*, applied to a man and often to a monster, towered up to cause still greater distraction.[8] The Pagan Pantheon had just sunk away from the support of the Roman mind. It was not only that the Pagan gods were individually too base and polluted to sustain the spiritual feelings of an expanding national intellect, but the whole collective idea of Deity was too feebly conceived by Paganism. Had the individuals of the Pantheon been purer and nobler, their doom was sealed, nevertheless, by their abstract deficiencies as modes of spiritual life for a race so growing as that of man. How unfortunate, therefore, that at this crisis, when ancient religions were crumbling into ruins, new gods should be arising from the veriest beasts amongst men — utterly repelled and rejected by the spiritual instinct in man, but suggested by a necessity of political convenience.

But oftentimes the excess of an evil is its cure, or the first impulse in that direction. From the connection of the great Augustan and Claudian houses with the family of Herod, much knowledge of Jewish peculiarities had been diffused in Rome. Agrippa, the grandson of Herod, Bernice, and others of the reigning

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house in Judea, had been long resident — had been loved and admired — in the imperial family. The tragical events in Herod's own household had drawn the attention of the Roman grandees and senate to Jewish affairs. The migrations to Rome of Jewish settlers, since the era of Pharsalia, had strengthened the interest, by keeping the enigma of the Jewish history and character constantly before the Roman eye. The upper and more intellectual circles in Rome of inquiring men and women kept up this interest through their military friends in the legions quartered upon Syria and Lower Egypt, many of whom must have read the Septuagint version of the Law and the Prophets. Some whispers, though dim and scarcely intelligible, would have made their way to Rome as to the scenes of the Crucifixion, able at least to increase the attraction of mystery. But a much broader and steadier interest would have been diffused by the accounts transmitted of the Temple, so mysterious from the absence of all idol, so magnificent to the eye and the ear from its glorious service. By the time when Vespasian and his son commanded in the East, and when the great insurrection of the Jewish race in Jerusalem was commencing, Josephus must have been well aware of this deep attention to his own people gathering in the highest quarters; and he must have been aware that what was now creeping into the subject of profoundest inquiry amongst the Jews themselves, viz. the true pretensions, the history, doctrines, and new morals, of those Nazarene revolutionists, would, by a natural transfer, soon become the capital object of attention to all Romans interested in Judea. The game was up for the separate glory of

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Judaism, the honor of the Mosaic legislation was becoming a superannuated thing, if he suffered the grandeur of Christianity, *as* such, and recognised for Christianity, to force its way upon the fermenting intellect of Rome. His discernment told him that the new Christian ethics never *would* be put down. That was impossible; but he fancied that it might be possible to disconnect the system of moral truth from the new but still obscure Christian sect, and to transfer its glory upon a pretended race of Hebrew recluses or immemorial eremites. As Lauder meant to say, 'This may be grand, but it is not Milton's;' so did Josephus mean to say, 'This may be very fine and very new, but take notice it is not Christ's.' During his captivity in Roman hands and in Rome, being one of the few cowards who had spiritedly volunteered as a traitor, and being a good scholar for a Jew, as well as a good traitor and the best of cowards, he enjoyed the finest opportunities of insinuating his ridiculous legend about the Essenes into the foremost literary heads of the universal metropolis. Imperial favor, and the increasing curiosity of Rome, secured him access to the most intellectual circles. His legend was adopted by the ruling authority in the literature of the earth; and an impossible lie became signed and countersigned for many centuries to come.

But how did this particular form arise for the lie? Were there no such people as the Essenes? Why, no; not as Josephus described them: if there were, or could be, then there were Christians without Christ; there was Christianity invented by man. Under *his* delineation, they existed only as King Arthur existed, or Morgan le Fay, or the sword Excalibur. Considered

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in their romantic pretensions, connected with the Round Table, these worthy blades of flesh and steel were pure dreams; but, as downright sober realities, known to cutlers and others, they certainly have a hold upon history. So of the Essenes: nobody could be more certain than Josephus that there *were* such people; for he knew the very street of Jerusalem in which they met; and in fact he had been matriculated amongst them himself. Only all that moonshine about remote seclusions, and antique derivations, and philosophic considerations, were fables of the Hesperides, or fit for the future use of Archbishop Turpin. What, then, is my own account of the Essenes?

The earliest great danger to which Christianity was exposed, arose with the Jews. This was the danger that besieged the cradle of the religion. From Rome no danger arose until the time of Trajan; and, as to the nature of this danger, the very wildest mistake is made in books innumerable. No Roman anger ever *did*, or ever *could*, point to any doctrine of Christianity; unless, indeed, in times long subsequent, when the Christian doctrines, though otherwise indifferent to the Roman authorities, would become exponents or convertible signs of the firm disloyalty to Cæsar which constitutes the one great offence of Christians. Will you burn incense to Cæsar? No. Well, that is your State crime, Christian; *that*, and neither less nor more. With the Jews the case was exactly reversed; they cared nothing about the external ceremonies (or *cultus*) of the Christians, what it was they practised, or what it was they refused to practise. A treasonable distinction would even have been a recommendation in their eyes; and as to any differences between their own

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ritual and the Christian, for these (had they been more or greater than they were) the ruling Jews would readily have found the same indulgence which they found for other schismatics, or imperfect proselytes, or doubtful brothers, or known Gentiles. All these things were trifles; what *they* cared about was exactly what the Romans did *not* care about, viz. the Christian doctrines in relation to Moses and the Messiah. Was the Messiah come? Were the prophecies accomplished? Was the Mosaic economy of their nation self-dissolved, as having reached its appointed terminus, or natural euthanasy, and lost itself in a new order of things? This concerned their existence as a separate people. If *that* were the Messiah, whom the Christians gave out for such, then all the fabric of their national hopes, their visions of an earthly restoration, were shattered. Into this question shot itself the whole agony of their hereditary interest and pride as the children of Abraham. The Jewish nature was now roused in good earnest. So much we may see sufficiently in the Acts of the Apostles; and we may be assured by more than one reflection, that the Jewish leaders at that time were resolved not again to commit the error of relaxing their efforts until the work of extermination was perfect. They felt, doubtless not without much surprise, but still with some self-reproach, that they had been too negligent in assuming the sect to have been trampled out by the judicial death of its leader. Dispersion had not prevented the members of the sect from recombining; and even the public death as a malefactor of the leader was so far from having dimmed the eyes or dejected the hopes of the body, that, under the new coloring given to it by

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the Christians, this very death had become the most triumphant of victories. There was, besides, a reason to dread the construction of the Romans upon this heresy, if it continued longer to defy public suppression. And there was yet another uneasiness that must greatly have been increasing — an uneasiness of an affecting nature, and which long afterwards, in ages nearer to our own, constituted the most pathetic feature in Christian martyrdoms. Oftentimes those who resorted to the fiery spectacle in pure hatred of the martyr, or who were purposely brought thither to be warned by salutary fear, were observed by degrees to grow thoughtful; instead of reaping confirmation in their feelings of horror, they seemed dealing with some internal struggle, musing, pausing, reflecting, and at length enamored as by some new-born love, languishing in some secret fascination. Those that in Pagan days caught in forests a momentary glimpse of the nymphs and sylvan goddesses, were struck with a hopeless passion; they were nympholepts: the affection, as well known as epilepsy, was called nympholepsy. This parallel affection, in those that caught a momentary celestial glimpse from the countenances of dying martyrs, by the side of their fiery couches, might be called martyrolepsy. And many were they that saw the secret glance. In mountainous lands, oftentimes when looking down from eminences far above the level of lakes and valleys, it has happened that I could not see the sun: the sun was hidden behind some gloomy mass of clouds; but far below I beheld, tremulously vibrating on the bosom of some half-hidden lake, a golden pillar of solar splendor which had escaped through rifts and rents in the

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clouds that to me were as invisible as the sun himself. So in the martyrdom of the proto-martyr St. Stephen, Paul of Tarsus, the learned Jew, could see no gates of heaven that opened, could see no solar orb: to him were visible, as the scenery about St. Stephen, nothing but darkness of error and clouds. Yet, as I far below in the lake, so he far below in the countenance of St. Stephen, saw, with consternation, reflected a golden sunlight, some radiance not earthly, which ought *not* to have been there. That troubled him. Whence came *that?* The countenance of Stephen, when the great chorus was even then arising — '*Stone him to death!*'[9] shone like the countenance of an angel. That countenance, which brought down to earth some revelation of a brightness in the sky, intercepted to Paul, perplexed him; haunted him sleeping, troubled him when awake. That face of the martyr brought down telegraphically from some altitude inaccessible to himself, a handwriting that *must* be authentic. It carried off to heaven, in the very moment of death, a glory that from heaven it must have borrowed. Upon this we may be sure that Paul brooded intensely; that the effect, noticed as so often occurring at martyrdoms, was already commencing in *him;* and probably that the noonday scene on the road to Damascus did but quicken and ante-date a result which would at any rate have come. That very case of Paul, and no doubt others not recorded, must continually have been causing fresh uneasiness to the Jewish leaders. Their own ministers were falling off to the enemy. And now, therefore, at last they were determined, once for all, that it should be decided who was to be Master in Jerusalem.

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The Apostles, on *their* side, and all their flock, though not losing a solemn confidence in the issue, could not fail to be alarmed. A contest of life and death was at hand. By what price of suffering and ruins the victory might need to be achieved, they could not measure. They had now faced, as they saw, without power any more to evade it, a fiery trial. Ordinary counsels would not avail; and according to the magnitude of the crisis, it became the first of duties to watch warily every step they should take, since the very first *false* one might happen to prove irretrievable. The interests of the youthful church were confided to *their* hands. Less than faithful they could not be; but for the present that was not enough. To be faithful in extremity was all that might remain at last; but for the present, the summons was — to be wise, so as to intercept that extremity, if possible. In this exigency, and with the sudden illumination which very perplexity will sometimes create, which the mere inspiration of distress will sometimes suggest, they devised the scheme of a Secret Society.

Armies of brave men have often not only honorably shut themselves up into impenetrable squares, or withdrawn altogether behind walls and batteries, but have even, by exquisite concert, suddenly dispersed over a thousand hills; have vanished at noon-day on the clapping of hands, as if into thick shadows; and again, by the clapping of hands, in a moment have reassembled in battle array. Such was the magical effect from the new device. The Christians are seen off their guard all around; spearmen wheel suddenly into view, but every Christian has vanished. The Christian is absolutely in the grasp of the serjeant; but,

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unaccountably, he slips away, and a shadow only remains in the officer's hand. The Christian fugitive is before your face, he rushes round a corner, you see him as he whirls round with a mask upon his face; one bound throws you round the corner upon his traces; and then you see no fugitive at all, no mask, but a man walking in tranquillity, who readily joins you in the pursuit.

The reader must consider — 1st, *what* it was that the Christians had to accomplish; and 2dly, *how* it was that such a thing could be accomplished in such almost impracticable circumstances. If the whole problem had been to bend before the storm, it was easy to do *that* by retiring for a season. But there were two reasons against so timid a course: *first*, the enemy was prepared, and watching for all such momentary expedients, waiting for the sudden forced retirement, waiting for the sudden stealthy attempt at resuming the old station; *secondly*, which was a more solemn reason for demur, this course might secure safety to the individual members of the church, but, in the meantime, it left the church, as a spiritual community, in a languishing condition — not only without means of extension, but without means even of repairing its own casual waste. Safety obtained on these terms was not the safety that suited apostolic purposes. It was necessary with the protection (and therefore with the present concealment) of the church to connect some machinery for nursing it — feeding it — expanding it. No theory could be conceived more audacious than the one rendered imperative by circumstances. Echo was not to babble of the whereabouts assigned to the local stations or points of ren-

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dezvous for this outcast church; and yet in this naked houseless condition she was to find shelter for her household; and yet, whilst blood-hounds were on her own traces, while she durst not look abroad through the mighty storm, this church was to be raising a college and a council, *de propaganda fide*, was to be working all day long in the centre of enemies raging for her blood, and to declare herself in permanent session when she had no foot of ground to stand upon.

This object, seemingly so impracticable, found an opening for all its parts in the *community* of field unavoidably cultivated by the church and the enemy of the church. Did the church seek to demonstrate the realization of the promised Messiah in the character and history of Christ? This she must do by diligently searching the prophetic types as the inner wards of the lock, and then searching the details of Christ's life and passion as the corresponding wards of the key. Did the enemy of the church seek to refute and confound this attempt to identify the Messiahship with the person of Jesus? This she could attempt only by labors in the opposite direction applied to the very same ground of prophecy and history. The prophecies and the traditions current in Judea that sometimes were held to explain, and sometimes to integrate, the written prophecies about the mysterious Messiah, must be alike important and alike commandingly interesting to both parties. Having, therefore, this fortunate common ground of theological study with her own antagonist, there was no reason at all why the Christian church should not set up a seminary of laborers for her own vineyard under the mask of enemies trained against herself. There was

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no sort of reason, in moral principle or in prudence, why she should not, under color of training learned and fervent enemies to the Christian name, silently prepare and arm a succession of servants for doing her own work. In order to stamp from the beginning a patriotic and intensely national character upon her new institution, leading men already by names and sounds into the impression that the great purpose of this institution was, to pour new blood into the life of old Judaic prejudices, and to build up again the dilapidation of Mosaic orthodoxy, whether due to time or to recent assaults, the church selected the name of *Essen* for the designation of the new society, from the name of an important gate in the temple: so that, from the original use, as well as from another application to the religious service of the temple, a college or fraternity of *Essenes* became, by its very name, a brief symbolic profession of religious patriotism and bigotry, or what the real bigots would consider orthodoxy, from the first, therefore, carried clear away from suspicion. But it may occur to the reader that the Christian founders would thus find themselves in the following awkward dilemma. If they carried out the seeming promise of their Judaic name, then there would be a risk of giving from the first an anti-Christian bias to the feelings of the students, which might easily warp their views for life. And on the other hand, if by direct discipline they began at an early stage to correct this bias, there arose a worse risk, viz. that their real purposes might be suspected or unmasked. In reality, however, no such risk would arise in either direction. The elementary studies (that is, suppose in the eight first ascending classes)

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would be, simply to accumulate a sufficient fund of materials, of the original documents, with the commentaries of every kind, and the verbal illustrations or glosses. In this stage of the studies, at any rate, and whether the first objects had or had not been Christian, all independent judgments upon subjects so difficult and mysterious would be discouraged as presumptuous; so that no opening would arise for suspicion against the teachers, on the one hand, as unfaithful to the supposed bigotry of the institution, nor on the other for encouraging an early pre-occupation of mind against Christian views. After passing No. 8 of the classes, the delicacy of the footing would become more trying. But until the very first or innermost class was reached, when the last reserves must be laid aside, two circumstances would arise to diminish the risk. The first is this — that the nearer the student advanced to the central and dangerous circles of the art, the more opportunity would the governors have had for observing and appraising his character. Now it is evident that, altogether apart from any considerations of the danger to the society connected with falseness, treachery, or generally with anti-Christian traits of character, even for the final uses and wants of the society, none but pure, gentle, truthful, and benign minds would avail the church for Christian ministrations. The very same causes, therefore, which would point out a student as dangerous to entrust with the capital secrets of the institution, would equally have taken away from the society all motive for carrying him farther in studies that must be thrown away for himself and others. He would be civilly told that his vocation did not see n to such

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pursuits; would have some sort of degree or literary honor conferred upon him, and would be turned back from the inner chambers, where he was beginning to be regarded as suspicious. Josephus was turned adrift in this way, there is no doubt. He fancied himself to have learned all, whilst in fact there were secret esoteric classes which he had not so much as suspected to exist. Knaves never passed into those rooms. A second reason, which diminished the risk, was, that undoubtedly under the mask of scholastic disputation the student was exercised in hearing all the arguments that were most searchingly profound in behalf of Christ's Messiahship. No danger would attend this: it was necessary for polemic discipline and gymnastics, so that it always admitted of a double explanation, reconcilable alike with the true end and the avowed end. But, though used only as a passage of practice and skill, such a scene furnished means at once to the Christian teachers in disguise for observing the degrees in which different minds melted or froze before the evidence. *There* arose fresh aids to a safe selection. And, finally, whilst the institution of the *Essenes* was thus accomplishing its first mission of training up a succession to the church, and providing for her future growth, it was also providing for the secret meeting of the church and its present consolation.

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NOTES.

Note 1. Page 290.

'*Chained down their Gods*':—Many of the Greek states, though it has not been sufficiently inquired *which* states and in what age, had a notion that in war-time the tutelary deities of the place, the epichorial gods, were liable to bribery, by secret offers of temples more splendid, altars better served, &c. from the enemy; so that a standing danger existed, lest these gods should desert to the hostile camp; and especially, because, not knowing the rate of the hostile biddings, the indigenous worshippers had no guide to regulate their own counterbiddings. In this embarrassment, the prudent course, as most people believed, was to chain the divine idols by the leg, with golden fetters.

Note 2. Page 291.

'*The Farrers.*'—There is, but by whom written I really forget, a separate memoir of this family, and published as a separate volume. In the county histories (such as Chauncy's, &c.) will also be found sketches of their history. But the most popular form in which their memorials have been retraced is a biography of Nicholas Farrer, introduced into one of the volumes, I cannot say which, of the Ecclesiastical Biography—an interesting compilation, drawn up by the late Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, a brother of the great poet.

Note 3. Page 293.

When a murderer is thoroughly diseased by vanity one loses all confidence in him. Cellini went upon the plan of claiming all eminent murders, suitable in point of time and place, that nobody else claimed; just as many a short poem in the Greek Anthologies, marked *adespoton* (or, *without an owner*), was sported by one pretender after another as his own. Even simple

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homicides he would not think it below him to challenge as his own. Two princes, at the very least, a Bourbon and a Nassau, he pretended to have shot; it might be so, but nobody ever came forward to corroborate his statement.

NOTE 4. Page 294.

This was the earliest attempt at a Polyglot Bible, and had its name from the town of *Complutum*, which is, I think, *Alcala de Henarez*. The Henarez is a little river. Some readers will thank me for mentioning that the accent is on the *first* syllable of Complutum, the *u* in the penultimate being short; not Complutum but Complŭtum.

NOTE 5. Page 300.

'*Unpleasantries*' — this is a new word, launched a very few years back in some commercial towns. It is generally used — not in any sense that the reader would collect from its antipole, *pleasantry*, but in a sense that he may abstract from the context in the sentence above.

NOTE 6. Page 306.

It may seem strange to insinuate against the *Aglaophamus* any objection, great or small, as regards its erudition — *that* being the main organ of its strength. But precisely here lay the power of Lobeck, and here his weakness; all his strength, and his most obvious defect. Of this he was sensible himself. At the very period of composing the *Aglaophamus*, he found reason to complain that his situation denied him access to great libraries: and this, perhaps, is felt by the reader most in the part relating to the Eleusinian mysteries, least in that relating to the Orphic. Previously, however, Lobeck had used his opportunities well. And the true praise of his reading is, not so much that it was unusually extensive, as that it was unusually systematic, and connected itself in all its parts by unity of purpose. At the same time it is a remark of considerable interest, that the student must not look in Lobeck, for luminous logic, or for simplicity of arrangement, which are qualifications for good writing, unknown to the great scholars of modern Germany, to Nie-

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buhr altogether, and in the next degree unknown to Ottfried Mueller, and to Lobeck. Their defects in this respect are so flagrant, as to argue some capital vice in the academic training of Germany. Elsewhere throughout the world no such monstrous result appears of chaotic arrangement from profound research. As regards philosophy, and its direct application to the enigmas of these Grecian mysteries, it is no blame to Lobeck that none must be looked for in *him*, unless he had made some pretence to it, which I am not aware that he did. Yet in one instance he ought to have made such a pretence: mere good sense should have opened his eyes to one elementary blunder of Warburton's. I tax W., I tax all who ever countenanced W., I tax all who have ever opposed W., I tax Lobeck as bringing up the rear of these opponents, one and all with the inexcusable blindness of torpor in using their natural eyesight. So much of philosophy as resides in the mere natural faculty of reflectiveness, would have exposed [pure sloth it was in the exercise of this faculty which concealed] the blunder of W. in confounding a *doctrinal* religion, [such as Judaism, Christianity, Islamism,] with a Pagan religion, which last has a *cultus* or ceremonial worship, but is essentially insusceptible of any dogma or opinion. Paganism had no creed, no faith, no doctrine, little or great, shallow or deep, false or true. Consequently the doctrine of a future state *did* not (because it *could* not) belong to Paganism. Having no doctrines of *any* sort, Grecian idolatry could not have *this*. All other arguments against W. were *à posteriori* from facts of archæology: this was *à priori* from the essential principle of an idolatrous religion. All other arguments proved the Warburtonian crotchet to be a falsehood: this proves it to be an impossibility. Other arguments contradict it: this leaves it in self-contradiction. And one thing let me warn the reader to beware of. In the Oriental forms of Paganism, such as Buddhism, Brahminism, &c., some vestiges of opinion seem at times to intermingle themselves with the facts of the mythology: all which, however, are only an aftergrowth of sectarian feuds, or philosophic dreams, that having survived opposition, and the memory of their own origin, have finally confounded themselves with the religion itself as parts in its original texture. But in Greece there never *was* any such confusion, even as a natural

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process of error. The schools of philosophy always keeping themselves alive, naturally always vindicated their own claims against any incipient encroachments of the national religion.

NOTE 7. Page 316.

'*Wicked Will Whiston.*'—In this age, when Swift is so little read, it may be requisite to explain that Swift it was who fastened this epithet of *wicked* to Will Whiston; and the humor of it lay in the very incongruity of the epithet; for Whiston, thus sketched as a profligate, was worn to the bone by the anxieties of scrupulousness: he was anything but wicked, being pedantic, crazy, and fantastical in virtue after a fashion of his own. He ruined his wife and family, he ruined himself and all that trusted in him, by crotchets that he never could explain to any rational man; and by one thing that he never explained to himself, which a hundred years after I explained very clearly, viz. that all his heresies in religion, all his crazes in ecclesiastical antiquities, in casuistical morals, and even as to the discovery of the longitude, had their rise, not (as his friends thought) in too much conscientiousness and too much learning, but in too little rhubarb and magnesia. In his autobiography he has described his own craziness of stomach in a way to move the gravest reader's laughter, and the sternest reader's pity. Everybody, in fact, that knew his case and history, stared at him, derided him, pitied him, and, in some degree, respected him. For he was a man of eternal self-sacrifice, and that is always venerable; he was a man of primitive unworldly sincerity, and that is always lovely; yet both the one and the other were associated with so many oddities and absurdities, as compelled the most equitable judge at times to join in the general laughter. He and Humphrey Ditton, who both held official stations as mathematicians, and were both honored with the acquaintance of Sir Isaac Newton, had both been candidates for the Parliamentary prize as discoverers of the longitude, and, naturally, both were found wrong; which furnishes the immediate theme for Swift's savage ridicule:

'The longitude mist on
By wicked Will Wiston;
And not better hit on
By good Master Ditton.'

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Note 8. Page 324.

The Romans themselves saw a monstrosity in this practice which did not really exist in the metaphysical necessity. It was, and it was *not*, monstrous. In reality it was rational, or monstrous, according to theoretic construction. Generally speaking, it was but a variety of that divinity which in Christendom all of us so long ascribed to kings. We English always laughed at the French with their *grand monarque*. The Americans of the United States have always laughed at us English, and the sanctity with which our constitution invests the Sovereign. We English, French, and Americans, have all alike laughed at the Romans upon this matter of *apotheosis*. And when brought before us under the idea of Seneca's *apocolocuntosis*, this practice has seemed too monstrous for human gravity. And yet again, we English, French, Americans, and Romans, should all have united in scorn for the deep Phrygian, Persian, or Asiatic servility to kings. We of European blood have all looked to the constitutional idea, not the individual person of the sovereign. The Asiatics, though *they* also still feebly were groping after the same deep idea, sought it in such a sensual body of externals, that none but a few philosophers could keep their grasp on the original problem. How profound an idea is the sanctity of the English sovereign's constitutional person, which idea first made possible the responsibility of the sovereign's ministers. They could be responsible, only if the sovereign were *not;* let *them* be accountable, and the king might be inviolable. Now really in its secret metaphysics the Roman apotheosis meant little more. Only the accountability lay not in Cæsar's ministers, but in the personal and transitory Cæsar, as distinguished from the eternal Imperator.

Note 9. Page 330.

There is a chorus of that title, powerfully conceived, in Dr Mendelssohn's Oratorio of St. Paul.

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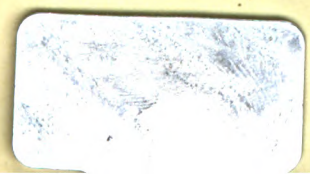
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